

Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth

(Al-Ghunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq)

VOLUME FOUR



SHAIKH ‘ABD AL-QĀDIR AL-JĪLĀNĪ

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY MUHTAR HOLLAND

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for Seekers
of the Path of Truth

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Sufficient Provision for Seekers of The Path of Truth

[*Al Ahunya li-Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq*]

A COMPLETE RESOURCE ON THE INNER AND OUTER ASPECTS OF ISLAM

VOLUME FOUR

SHAIKH ‘ABD AL-QĀDIR AL-JĪLĀNĪ

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY MUHTAR HOLLAND



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"He [Allāh] is the Truth." Qur'ān (22:6)

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Ms. Filippi, who currently resides in Colombia, has lived and worked in Italy, England, Mexico, and the United States.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*So remember Me,
and I will remember you...
(Qur'ān 2:152)*

CHAPTER SEVEN

Concerning the practice of fasting all year long [*ṣiyām ad-dahr*], and the spiritual reward and recompense due to someone who observes it.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,¹ that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The most meritorious form of fasting [*ṣiyām*] is the fasting of David [*Dāwūd*],² and if someone fasts throughout the entire year [*ṣāma ’d-dahr kulla-hu*], he has already given himself to Allāh (Exalted is He).

According to Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿari (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a person fasts all year long [*ṣāma ’d-dahr*], Hell will become too narrow for him, [as it keeps shrinking] like this...

—and he clenched his fists repeatedly, as if making a finger-count up to ninety [*ʿaqada tisʿīn*].

According to a report from Shuʿaib, it was Saʿd ibn Ibrāhīm who said: “ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) used to fast all year long [*kānat taṣūmu ’d-dahr*].”

Yaʿqūb is reported as having said: “My father once told us that Saʿd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) made a constant practice of fasting throughout the last forty years of his life.”

¹ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdi’llāh ibn al-Bannāʾ—Abū’l-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad al-Muqri—Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad al-Qarainī—al-Ḥasan ibn Suhail—Yaḥyā—Ibrāhīm ibn Abi Najā—Ṣafwān ibn Salīm—ʿAlqama ibn Abi ʿAlqama—ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

² As reported on the authority of ʿAbdu’llāh ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The best kind of fasting [*ṣiyām*] is the fasting of David [*Dāwūd*] (peace be upon him), for he made it his practice to fast on alternate days throughout the entire year [*niṣf ad-dahr*].

Abū Idrīs ‘Ā’idhu’llāh is reported as having said: “Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) kept fasting until he become as slim as a toothpick, so I said to him: ‘O Abū Mūsā, how about giving your poor self a break?’ But he replied: ‘Give it a break? What I want is to see it overtaking all the lean horses in the race!’”

Abū Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm is reported as having said: “‘Ammār, the Christian monk [*rāhib*], once told me about a remarkable dream-experience of his, which he described in these words: ‘I saw [the holy spiritual being called] Sakīna az-Zafāriyya in my dream. She was present with us at the religious gathering [*majlis*] convened by ‘Īsā ibn Zādhān at al-Abla, having come down from al-Baṣra for the specific purpose of paying him a visit. So I said to her: “O Sakīna, what has ‘Īsā done [to deserve your attention]?” She laughed, then she replied: “He has donned the raiment of splendid beauty [*bahā’*]!” The servants circled around him with pitchers [of water for his ablution], then he put on his clothes, and someone was heard to exclaim: “O reader of Scripture [*yā qārī’*], you must recite an incantation [*ruqya*], for—by my life—your fasting has left you utterly emaciated!” ‘Īsā had fasted indeed, to the point where his body was bent in a stoop, and he had lost his voice.’”

Anas [ibn Mālik] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “Abū Ṭalḥa (may Allāh be well pleased with him) did no fasting at all, during the lifetime of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), on account of [his constant involvement in] military campaigns [*ghazw*]. But after Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had died, I never once saw him break his daily fast, except on the Day of Breaking Fast [*Yawm al-Fitr*] [at the end of the month of Ramaḍān], and on the Day of Sacrifice [*Yawm an-Naḥr*] [at the end of the Pilgrimage].”

As we learn from a traditional report, it was Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥarth ibn Hishām who said: “Someone told me that, on a summer’s day, he had seen Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) pouring water over his head, on account of the extreme intensity of the heat and thirst, even though he was fasting at the time.”

‘Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported³ as having said: “Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him

³ *Author’s note:* The chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report goes back to: Sufyān [ath-Thawri]—Abū Ishāq—al-Ḥarth—‘Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

peace) used to fast for a day, then go for a day without fasting.”

In the traditional account [*ḥadīth*] that has come down to us on the authority of Jābir (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we find that he said:⁴

“‘Umar [ibn al-Khaṭṭāb] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): ‘O Prophet of Allāh [*yā Nabīyya’llāh*], inform us about [the condition of] a man who fasts throughout the entire year [*yaṣūmu ’d-dahr kulla-hu*]?’ To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

‘May that person neither fast nor break fast [*lā sāma dhālika wa lā aftarā*]!’”⁵

When properly construed, this remark must apply to a man who has fasted literally throughout the year, without breaking fast on the days of the Two Festivals [*al-’Īdain*] and during the Days of *Tashrīq*⁶ [when fasting is actually forbidden]. Such was the construction placed upon it by Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal⁷ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). As for someone who breaks fast on these particular days, and devotes the rest of the year to fasting, no prohibition is applicable in his case. On the contrary, indeed, he is entitled to all the excellent merits we have mentioned above.



⁴ For a more detailed version of this traditional report, see Vol. 3, p. 46 .

⁵ In one version of this traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is said to have exclaimed: “He who fasts all the time, may he neither fast nor return to what is good in normal everyday life [*iman sāma ’d-dahra fa-lā sāma wa lā āla*]! In either case, according to traditional authorities, this is an imprecation uttered by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), “lest a man should come to believe that this kind of fasting has been ordained by Allāh (Exalted is He); or, through physical incapacity, should become insincere; or because, by fasting all the days of the year, he would do so even on the days when fasting is strictly forbidden.” (See: E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. ’-W-L.)

⁶ See note 344 on p. 248 below; also Vol. 3, pp. 262–66 and 270–71.

⁷ Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools [*madhāhib*] of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 241/855 C.E. The legal doctrines of the Ḥanbalī school were those studied most intensively by the author, Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as a young man.

Concerning the merit of fasting [*ṣiyām*] in general.

On this subject, as we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr,⁸ Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the purpose of gaining the countenance of Allāh (Exalted is He), Allāh will keep him at a distance from Hell—at the distance covered by a raven [*ghurāb*] that takes flight when it is merely a chick, and then stays airborne till it dies of old age.

It is said that the raven [*ghurāb*] has a normal lifespan of fifty years!

According to a report from Abu’d-Dardā’ (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the sake of Allāh’s cause [*fi sabili ‘llāh*], Allāh will install a trench [*khandaq*] between him and the Fire of Hell, and the width thereof will be as great as the distance between the heaven and the earth.

According to another traditional report, this one from Abū Sa’id al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone devotes a single day to fasting, for the sake of Allāh’s cause [*fi sabili ‘llāh*], Allāh will reward him for it by keeping his face at a distance from the Fire of Hell, for seventy autumn seasons.

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: “I once heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

“Whenever a servant [of the Lord] embarks upon the morning in a state of fasting, the gates of heaven are opened up for him, the members of his body glorify the Lord, and the inhabitants of the heaven of this lower world [*ahl samā’ ad-dunyā*] seek forgiveness on his behalf, until the world disappears behind the veil [of night]. If that servant also performs one or two cycles of ritual prayer

⁸ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from ‘Amr ibn Rabi’a—Salām ibn Qais (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

[*šallā rak' a aw rak' atain*], as a voluntary act of devotion [*tatawwu'an*], the heaven will radiate a light for his benefit, and his wives among the lovely-eyed brides of Paradise [*al-hūr al-'in*]⁹ will say: "O Allāh, fetch him here to us, for we are eagerly yearning to set our eyes upon him!" If he also declares the Uniqueness of Allāh [*hallala*],¹⁰ or proclaims His Glory [*sabbaha*],¹¹ his utterances will be received by seventy thousand angels, who will go on recording them until the world disappears behind the veil [of night]."

As reported by Abū Šālih, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

Every good deed performed by the human being [*ibn Ādam*] is [known to be counted] as from ten good deeds to a hundred good deeds, or up to seven hundred good deeds, with the exception of fasting [*šawm*], for Allāh (Exalted is He) has said in one of His Books: "Fasting is Mine, and I determine its reward."¹² As for the odor of the mouth of someone who is fasting, it is more fragrant to Allāh than the scent of musk.

‘Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: "I once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

Though a person is prevented, by keeping the fast, from taking the food and drink for which he has an appetite, Allāh will feed him from the fruits of the Garden of Paradise, and He will quench his thirst from the pure drink thereof.

According to a report from Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

For all those people who perform good work, there is a particular gate, among the gateways of the Garden of Paradise, through which they will be invited to enter, as a reward for that good work. As for the people who practice fasting, there is a special gate through which they will be invited to enter, and it is called *ar-Rayyān* ["plump and juicy"].

⁹ The 'houries' [*hūr* or *hawrā'*] of Paradise are mentioned in several verses [*āyāt*] of the Qur'ān. Literally, according to the Arabic lexicographers, the term means 'women whose eyes are characterized by intense whiteness of the part that is white, and intense blackness of the part that is black,' or, more poetically, 'women with eyes resembling those of the gazelle.' (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. H-W-R.)

¹⁰ The Arabic verb *hallala*, of which *tahlīl* is the corresponding verbal noun, means "to declare the Uniqueness of Allāh, by saying: 'There is no god but Allāh [*lā ilāha illa'llāh*].'"

¹¹ The Arabic verb *sabbaha*, of which *tasbīh* is the corresponding verbal noun, means "to proclaim the Glory of Allāh, by saying: 'Glory be to Allāh [*subhāna'llāh*].'"

¹² Variants of this Divine Saying [*Ḥadīth Qudsī*] have been recorded by several of the most highly respected traditional authorities. For a scholarly study of six of these variants (none of them quite identical with either of those quoted in the above subsection), see: William A. Graham. *Divine Word and Prophetic Word in Early Islam*. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1977; pp. 186–190.

When Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) heard this, he said: “O Messenger of Allāh, will some folk be invited to enter through all of these gates?” “Yes,” replied the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), “and I do hope that you will be one of them, O Abū Bakr!” He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Everything has its own gate or doorway, and the doorway to worshipful service [*‘ibāda*] is fasting.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

You must be sure to practice fasting, for your hearts will be then be purified.

As reported on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Fasting is one half of patience [*aṣ-ṣawmu niṣfu ‘ṣ-ṣabr*]. Everything has to pay some form of alms-due [*zakāt*], and the alms-due of the physical body is fasting.

As reported on the authority of Abū Awfā (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The sleep of one who fasts is an act of worshipful service [*‘ibāda*], his silence is a glorification of the Lord [*tasbīh*],¹³ and his good work is sure to be accepted.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

A table made of gold will be spread, on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], before those who now observe the practice of fasting. It will be laden with fish, so they will eat thereof, while the rest of the people look on.

This next report has come to us from Aḥmad ibn Abi’l-Ḥawārī, who said that he heard it from Abū Sulaimān, when the latter told him: “Abū ‘Alī al-Aṣamm [‘the Deaf’] has brought me the finest traditional saying [*ḥadīth*] I ever heard in this world. This is how it goes:

“A table will be laid before those who now practice fasting, and they will eat from it while the rest of the people are being subjected to the Reckoning. ‘O Lord,’ the latter will say, ‘how is it that we are being called to account, while those folk are busy eating?’ So He will explain: ‘For such a long time, they would be engaged in fasting, while you would

¹³ See note 11 on p. 9 above.

be breaking fast, and they would be keeping night vigil, while you would be sleeping.”

As reported by Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

When they emerge from their graves [at the Resurrection], the fragrant aroma of musk will issue from the mouths of those who now practice fasting. A table will be brought to them from the Garden of Paradise, and from it they will eat, while sitting in the shade of the Heavenly Throne [*‘Arsh*].

It was Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaina who said: “According to my information, someone who keeps the fast will not be called to account [at the Resurrection] for what he takes when he breaks his fast.”

As reported by Abū Ṣāliḥ, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says: “Fasting is Mine, and I determine its reward. He abstains from his carnal appetite, his food, and his drink for My sake. Fasting is a protective shield [*junnā*].” For someone who keeps the fast, there are two delights in store: one delight at the moment of breaking his fast, and one delight at the moment of meeting his Lord. As for the odor of the mouth of someone who is fasting, it is more fragrant to Allāh than the scent of musk.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdi’llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Fasting is a protective shield [*junnā*], by means of which the servant [of the Lord] is shielded from the Fire of Hell.

According to Sa‘īd ibn Jubair, who heard the report from Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

“I feel no keen sense of regret over anything belonging to this world, which I shall have to leave behind me, apart from fasting in the midday heat [*hājira*] and walking to the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”

As reported by Mujāhid, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a man were to fast voluntarily [*taṭawwu’an*], for the sake of Allāh, even if he were to be given enough gold to fill the earth, he would not have received his reward in full, this side of the final Reckoning.

Traditional reports concerning the recitation of various litanies [*awrād*] during the observance of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], which is a practice to be encouraged.

As for the recitation of nighttime litanies [*awrād al-lail*], and the incentive to keep vigil [*qiyām*], there are many traditional reports in favor of the practice. Some of these reports, the authenticity of which is unanimously accepted, are recorded in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ*'s,¹⁴ while some are mentioned in other books [of tradition]. Let us therefore quote a number of examples from these sources:

As reported on the authority of Shafīq, it was 'Abdu'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "A certain man was mentioned in the presence of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), to whom someone said: 'O Messenger of Allāh, so-and-so spent the whole night asleep, right through to the break of day. He never got up to perform any [voluntary] ritual prayers.' On hearing this, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) exclaimed:

"The devil [*shaiṭān*] must have pissed in that man's ear!"

According to one traditional report [*khabar*] [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said]:

While a man is sleeping, the devil [*shaiṭān*] ties knots on his head, three knots in all. If the sleeper sits up and remembers Allāh (Exalted is He), one knot will be undone. If he performs the minor ritual ablution [*wuḍū'*], a second knot will be untied, and if he performs two cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣallā rak'atain*], all the knots will be loosened. In that case, when morning comes, he will be fresh and in a cheerful mood; otherwise, however, the morning will find him sluggish and bad-tempered.

According to another traditional report [*khabar*] [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said]:

The devil [*shaiṭān*] has a kind of snuff [*sa'ūt*], a kind of syrup [*la'ūq*] and a kind of powder [*dharīr*]. When he gets the servant [of the Lord] to take this snuff,

¹⁴ These are the two most famous collections of Prophetic traditions, separately entitled *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. (The term *ṣaḥīḥ* means "correct; authentic.")

the man becomes badly behaved. When he administers the syrup, the man acquires a sharp and evil tongue. Then, when he applies the powder, the man sleeps right through the night till the break of day.

It is customary¹⁵ to prolong the upright posture [*ṭūl al-qiyām*] in the course of the [voluntary] nighttime ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*], which is performed in two sets of two cycles [*mathnā mathnā*]. (In the [voluntary] daytime ritual prayer [*ṣalāt an-nahār*], on the other hand, it is customary to emphasize the frequency of bowing [*rukūʿ*] and prostration [*sujūd*].) Nevertheless, if the worshipper wishes to perform it as a four-cycle prayer, with one concluding salutation [*taslīma*], it is permissible for him to do so.

In the case of the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the nighttime ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*] was [more than] a supererogatory devotion [*nāfila*]; it was also an obligatory duty [*farīḍa*], an act of drawing near [to Allāh] [*qurba*], and a charismatic event [*karāma*]. In the case of his Community [*Umma*], it is a complement and supplement to the obligatory observances [*farāʾid*].

As reported on the authority of Sālim, it was Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said:

“Whenever a man experienced an unusual dream, during the lifetime of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), he would be sure to recount it to Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). I dearly wished that I might also experience such a dream, so that I could then recount it to Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). At the time I am recalling, during the lifetime of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when I was quite a young fellow and still a bachelor, I would often sleep in the mosque [*masjid*]. It was there that I eventually saw a vision in my sleep: It seemed as if two angels had seized me and carried me toward the Fire of Hell, which appeared to be sunk in a hole, like the hole of a well. It also appeared to have two horns, like the horns [or posts] of a well. I noticed the presence of people I knew, so I set about saying: ‘I take refuge with Allāh from the Fire of Hell. I take refuge with Allāh from the Fire of Hell.’ At this point, another angel approached us and said: ‘It will come as no surprise to me, if you really do end up here!’”

¹⁵ By “customary” we mean following the exemplary custom [*sunna* in Arabic] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) went on to say: “I recounted this experience to [my sister] Ḥafṣa, and Ḥafṣa (may Allāh be well pleased with her) recounted it in turn to [her husband] the Messenger of Allāh (Allāh bless him and give him peace). When he had heard the story, Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: ‘Yes, the man is the servant of Allāh. If only he would perform the ritual prayer [*yuṣallī*] during part of the night!’”

Sālim concluded this report with the observation: “From that moment on, Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) spent very little of the night asleep.”

As reported on the authority of Abū Salama, it was ‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Amr al-‘Āṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: “Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to me:

“‘You must not be like so-and-so, who used to stay awake at night [*kāna yaqūmu ‘l-lail*], but neglected to observe the practice of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*].’”

According to one traditional report,¹⁶ al-Ḥusain ibn ‘Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was told by his father, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once paid a nighttime visit to him and his [wife, the Prophet’s] daughter, Fāṭima (may Allāh be well pleased with her and with her husband), only to find them both sound asleep.

[The report continues in ‘Alī’s own words (may Allāh be well pleased with him)]: “He said: ‘Are you not performing your prayers?’ So I replied: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, our souls are surely in the hand of Allāh (Exalted is He), so if He wishes to arouse us, He will surely arouse us!’” Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) moved away, when I said that to him, and he did not offer any direct response, but I could hear him slapping his thigh, as he recited (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

But man is more than anything
prone to disputation. (18:54) ” *wa kāna ‘l-insānu
akthara shai’ in jadalā.*

¹⁶ **Author’s note:** For this report, the chain of transmission [*isnād*] goes back through the following links: Abū Ṣāliḥ—Ibn Shihāb—‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusain—his father, al-Ḥusain ibn ‘Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—his father, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,¹⁷ that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Two cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatān*], performed in the middle of the night, are better than this world and all that it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community [*Ummatī*], I would have made their performance compulsory for them.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr,¹⁸ Abū Muslim once asked Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with him): “Which nighttime prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*] is the most meritorious?” Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) responded by saying: “I once asked Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) that very same question, and he told me:

“[The most meritorious is the prayer in] the middle of the night [*jawf al-lail*]—(or he may have said: ‘the halfway point of the night [*niṣf al-lail*]’)—though few indeed are they who perform it.”

According to certain traditional reports [*akhbār*], the Prophet David [*Dāwūd an-Nabī*] (peace be upon him) once asked a similar question of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), for he said: “My God [*Ilāhī*], I dearly wish to offer You my worshipful service, so which time is most appropriate?” Allāh (Exalted is He) thereupon conveyed to him [*awḥā ilai-hi*] by way of inspiration: “O David, do not keep vigil in either the first part of the night or the last part thereof, because if someone keeps vigil in the first part, he will sleep through the last part, and if someone keeps vigil in the last part, he will not keep vigil in the first part. You should rather keep vigil in the middle of the night, for then you will be alone with Me, and I will be Alone with you. You should also offer up your needs to Me [at that time of night].”

As reported on the authority of Yahyā ibn al-Mukhtār, it was al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: “The servant [of the Lord] can perform no deed that is more soothing to the

¹⁷ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdī’llāh ibn al-Bannāʾ—Sufyān ath-Thawrī—Abu’z-Zubair—Jābir ibn ‘Abdī’llāh** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹⁸ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from **Abu’l-‘Āliya—Abū Muslim—Abū Dharr** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

eye, or lighter on the back, or more cheering to the spirit, than vigil kept from the middle of the night to the very end—unless it be the spending of wealth on a worthy cause.”

Abu’*d*-Dardā’ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to say: “O you people, for you I am a faithful counsellor [*nāṣih*], for you I am a caring sympathizer [*shafīq*], [so hear me when I say]: ‘Perform the ritual prayer in the darkness of the night, in preparation for the lonely desolation of the graves. Keep the fast here in this world, in preparation for the blistering heat of the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm an-Nushūr*]. Be active in charitable giving, for fear of a day of great hardship [*yawm ‘asīr*].¹⁹ O you people, for you I am a faithful counsellor [*nāṣih*], for you I am a caring sympathizer [*shafīq*]!”

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ has also informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,²⁰ that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

When a third of the night is still remaining, Allāh (Exalted is He) descends to the lowest heaven [*as-samā’ ad-dunyā*], and He keeps saying, until the dawn breaks: “Is there anyone ready to appeal to Me, so that I may answer his plea? Is there anyone ready to seek My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him? Is there anyone ready to ask Me for sustenance, so that I may sustain him? Is there anyone seeking the removal of harm, so that I may remove it from him?”

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ has further informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,²¹ that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Our Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) descends every night to the lowest heaven [*as-samā’ ad-dunyā*], during the last third of the night, and He says: “Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, so that I may forgive him? Is there anyone offering a supplication, so that I may respond to him? Is there anyone making a petition, so I may grant his petition?”

This is surely enough to explain why they [our righteous predecessors] would always recommend the performance of ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] during the last part of the night!

¹⁹ This is an allusion to Q. 74:8–10

²⁰ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdīllāh ibn al-Bannā’—Yahyā ibn Abī Kathīr—Abū Ja‘far—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

²¹ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from **Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “When someone asked Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): ‘Which part of the night is best for the hearing [of supplications]?’ he replied:

“The middle of the last part of the night, and the ends of the prescribed ritual prayers [*adbār aṣ-ṣalawāt al-maktūbal*].”

As reported on the authority of ‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The best kind of fasting [*ṣiyām*] is the fasting of David [*Dāwūd*] (peace be upon him), for he made it his practice to fast on alternate days throughout the entire year [*niṣf ad-dahr*]. The best kind of ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is likewise the ritual prayer of David [*Dāwūd*] (peace be upon him), for he used to sleep for half of the night, then devote the last part of the night to ritual prayer, until one sixth of the night still remained.

In differently worded version [*lafẓ*] of this report from ‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the saying attributed to Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) reads as follows:

The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] that is dearest to Allāh is the ritual prayer of David [*Dāwūd*] (peace be upon him). He used to sleep for half of the night, then wake up and keep vigil. Then he would sleep in the last part of the night. He would thus keep vigil for the third of the night after its halfway point.

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: “I divide the night into thirds. During one third I sleep, during one third I perform the ritual prayer [*uṣallī*], and during one third I memorize the tradition [*ḥadīth*] of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).”

It was Ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: “The superior merit of the [voluntary] nighttime ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*], as opposed to the [voluntary] daytime ritual prayer [*ṣalāt an-nahār*], is comparable to the superior merit of charitable donation [*ṣadaqa*] made in secret, as opposed to charitable donation made in public.”

‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: “A single cycle of ritual prayer [*rak‘a*], performed in the nighttime, is better than ten performed in the daytime.”

It is reported that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once asked Gabriel [*Jibrīl*] (peace be upon him): “Which part of

the night is best for the hearing [of supplications].” He received the reply: “The Heavenly Throne [*‘Arsh*] is positively tingling during the pre-dawn interlude [*sahar*].”

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

You must be sure to maintain the keeping of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], for it has been the regular practice of the righteous [*ṣāliḥīm*] before you. The keeping of night vigil is a means of drawing near to Allāh (Exalted is He), of atoning for evil deeds, of preventing the commission of sins, and of driving sickness away from the physical body.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ has also informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,²² that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

In the course of the night, there is an hour so special that, if a servant [of the Lord] asks something of Allāh (Exalted is He) at a moment coinciding with that hour, He will certainly grant his request.

There is one such hour in the course of every night. They [the religious scholars] have stated that this is a general occurrence, corresponding [in its mysterious character] to the special hour on Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Yawm al-Jum‘a*], and to the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] in the last ten days of the month of Ramaḍān.²³

It is also said that, in the course of the night, there is a particular time when everyone is bound to go to sleep, when every conscious individual is bound to experience the loss of consciousness, with the sole exception of the Ever-Living, the Eternally Self-Sustaining [*al-Ḥayy al-Qayyūm*], the One who never dies. For all we know, it may be this very same hour.

In the tradition [*ḥadīth*] reported by ‘Amr ibn ‘Utba, we are told that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

You must be sure to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] of the last part of the night, for it is witnessed and attended [*mashhūda maḥḍūra*]. It is attended by the angels of the night, and also by the angels of the day [*malā’ikat al-lail wa malā’ikat an-nahār*].

²² **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—al-A‘mash—Abū Sufyān—Jābir** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

²³ In the Seventh Discourse of the present work, Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has quoted a long traditional report, containing a vivid description of the wonders of the nights of the month of Ramaḍān. (See Vol. 3, p. 89.)

**Concerning the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]
performed by Allāh’s Messenger
(Allāh bless him and give him peace)
at certain times during the night.**

On the subject of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] performed by Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) at certain times during the night, many traditional reports are recorded in the collections that are unanimously accepted as authentic. Let us therefore quote some examples from these reliable sources:

Abū Ishāq is reported as having said: “I once paid a visit to al-Aswad ibn Yazīd. He was a spiritual brother of mine, and a good friend, so I said to him: ‘O Abū ‘Amr, tell me what ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) related to you about the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).’ In response to my request, he told me that she had said (may Allāh be well pleased with her):

““The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to sleep during the first part of the night, and devote the latter part of it to keeping vigil. Then, if he needed to attend to his family, he would take care of the need in question. Without touching water, he would then go straight to sleep. As soon as he heard the first call [to prayer], he would jump up [*wathaba*],” (‘No, by Allāh, she did not say: “he would stand up [*qāma*],”’) “and pour water on himself.” (‘No again, by Allāh, she did not say: “and perform the major ablution [*ighṭasala*].” I know what you have in mind!’) “If he was not in a state of major ritual impurity [*junub*], he would perform his minor ablution [*wuḍū’*] in preparation for the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. Then he would perform the prayer [*ṣallā*].””

As reported on the authority of Kuraib, the freedman [*mawlā*] of Ibn ‘Abbās: “Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his

father) once spent a night in the home of Maimūna, the Mother of the Believers [*Umm al-Mu'minīn*] (may Allāh be well pleased with her). He [Ibn 'Abbās] said:

“So I laid myself down to rest in a crosswise position on the cushion [*wisāda*], while Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and his wife reclined on it lengthwise. Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) slept until the night was halfway through, or slightly before that point, or slightly after it. Then Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) awoke, sat up, and rubbed the sleep from his face with his hand. Then he recited the ten Qur’ānic verses [*āyāt*] that form the concluding section [*al-āyāt al-khawātim*] of the Sūra of the Family of ‘Imrān [*Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān*], beginning with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

[There are signs for] those who remember Allāh, standing and sitting and on their sides, and who reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth: “Our Lord, You have not created this in vain. Glory be to You! So guard us against the torment of the Fire.” (3:191)	<i>alladhīna yadhkurūna 'llāha qiyāman wa qu'ūdan wa 'alā jumūbi-him wa yatafakkarūna fī khalqī 's-samāwāti wa 'l-arḍ: Rabba-nā mā khalaqta hādha bātilā: subhāna-ka fa-qi-nā 'adhāba 'n-nār.</i>
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—and ending with His words (Exalted is He):

O you who believe, endure with patience, outdo all others in patient endurance, be ready, and observe your duty to Allāh, in order that you may succeed. (3:200)	<i>yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanu 'šbirū wa šābirū wa rābiṭū: wa 'ttaqu 'llāha la'alla-kum tuflīhūn.</i>
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“Then he stood up, reached for a dangling waterskin, and drew water from it for his minor ablution [*wuḍū'*], which he performed in a most thorough fashion. He then stood at the ready, and proceeded to perform the ritual prayer [*qāma fa-ṣallā*].”

“Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) went on to say: ‘So I got up too, and did the same things that Allāh’s

Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had done. Then I went and stood by his side, at which point Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) placed his right hand on my head, took hold of my right ear, and gave it a twist. Then he proceeded to perform two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak’atain*], then two more cycles, then two more cycles, then two more cycles, and then two more cycles. Then he concluded the odd-numbered prayer [*awtara*] with a single cycle [*rak’a*]. Then he lay down to rest, until the muezzin [*mu’adhdhin*] came by. Then he got up again, and performed two simple, unprotracted cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣallā rak’atain khaṭfatain*]. Then he went out [to the mosque] and performed the [prescribed] prayer of daybreak [*ṣalla’-ṣ-ṣubḥ*].”

As reported on the authority of Abū Salama, ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: “I would never find the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in any position, during the late pre-dawn interlude [*saḥar*], except that of lying asleep beside me.” (This was her way of saying: “after the *witr* prayer.”)

Masrūq is reported as having said: “‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once told me: ‘The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was always pleased by work performed with consistent regularity.’ So I asked her: ‘Which part of the night did he often say [that he liked best]?’ and she replied: ‘When he heard the crowing of the rooster [*ṣāriḥh*].’”

As reported on the authority of al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Perform the ritual prayer [*ṣallū*] in the course of the night, if only four [cycles]. Perform the ritual prayer, if only two cycles [*rak’atain*]. Whenever the members of a given household are recognized [in heaven], as people known to practice ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] in the nighttime, an angelic crier will cry out to them: “O members of that household there, wake up to perform your ritual prayer [*qūmū li-ṣalāti-kum*]!”

According to a report from Abū Salama, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Allāh has never listened to anything as much as He has listened to a Prophet [*Nabī*] with a beautiful voice, chanting the Qur’ān.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of ‘Urwa, ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: “The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once heard a man reciting a Sūra [of the Qur’ān] during the night, so he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

‘May Allāh bestow His mercy upon him! He has reminded me of such-and-such a verse [āya], which I had omitted from the Sūra of such-and such.’”

As for the amount of ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform during the nighttime, we may cite the following traditional report, conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’:²⁴

‘Urwa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) said that ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once told him: “In the course of the night, Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform thirteen cycles [of voluntary prayer] and the two cycles of the dawn prayer [*rak’atayī ’l-fajr*].”

It is also reported that, in the course of the night, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would perform twelve cycles of ritual prayer, then he would conclude the odd-numbered prayer [*awtara*] with a single cycle [*rak’a*]. According to some accounts, however, [he would perform not twelve but only] ten cycles, then he would conclude the odd-numbered prayer [*awtara*] with a single cycle [*rak’a*].



²⁴ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdī’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abī’l-Fawāris—Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf—Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Malḥān—Abū Bakr—al-Laith—Ibn Abī Ḥabīb—‘Arrāk—‘Urwa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)—‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Qur'ānic verses [āyāt] concerning those who perform the ritual prayer [ṣalāt] during the night.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has mentioned those who keep vigil by night [al-qā'imīn bi'l-lail] in His Glorious Book [the Qur'ān], for He has told us (Almighty and Glorious is He):

They used to sleep only a little during the night, and with the dawning of each day, they would seek forgiveness. (51:17,18)

*kānū qalīlan
mina 'l-laili mā yahja'ūn:
wa bi'l-ashhāri
hum yastaghfirūn.*

He has also said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

Their sides shun their couches, as they call on their Lord in fear and hope. (32:16)

*tatajāfā junūbu-hum 'ani 'l-maḍājī'i
yad'ūna Rabba-hum
khawfan wa ṭama'a.*

He has also said (Exalted is He):

Or is he who is obedient in the watches of the night, bowing and standing erect, being wary of the hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord...? Say: "Are they equal, those who know and those who do not know?" Only those with powers of understanding will remember and take heed. (39:9)

*am-man huwa qānitun
ānā'a 'l-laili
sājidan wa qā'iman
yahdharu 'l-ākhirata
wa yarjū rahmata
Rabbi-h: qul
hal yastawi 'lladhīna
ya'lamūna
wa 'lladhīna lā ya'lamūn:
inna-mā yatadhakaru
ulu 'l-albāb.*

He has also said (Blessed and Exalted is He):

and who spend the night before their Lord, prostrate and standing; (25:65)

*wa 'lladhīna yabītūna
li-Rabbi-him
sujjadan wa qiyāmā:*

He has also said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

And as for the night, keep vigil	<i>wa mina 'l-laili fa-tahajjad</i>
during a part of it, as a supererogatory	<i>bi-hi nāfilatan la-k:</i>
work of devotion for you; it may be	<i>'asā an yab' atha-ka</i>
that your Lord will raise you up	<i>Rabbu-ka</i>
to a praiseworthy station. (17:79)	<i>maqāman mahmūdā.</i>

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

When, on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], Allāh assembles those of ancient times and those who came later, an angelic herald will cry out: “Let them now arise, all those whose sides used to shun their couches, as they called upon their Lord in fear and hope!” They will thereupon arise, but they will be very few.

Then the herald will return, and this time he will cry: “Let them now arise, all those whom neither commerce nor trafficking diverted from the remembrance of Allāh!” They will thereupon arise, but they will be very few.

The herald will then return again, and this time he will cry: “Let them now arise, all those who used to praise Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in good times and in bad.” They will thereupon arise, but they will be very few. The rest of the people will then be called to account in turn.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

You must take advantage of the pre-dawn meal [*ṭa'ām as-sahar*], to help you prepare for the daytime fasting, and of the daytime siesta [*qailūla*], to help you prepare for the nighttime vigil [*qiyām al-lail*]. The addict of sleep will come away bankrupt [*muflis*], and no one spends the whole length of the night asleep, unless the devil [*shaitān*] has pissed in his ear.

Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would often repeat a Qur’ānic verse [*āya*] until the break of dawn, and ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) lay sleeping [close beside me] one night, until his skin became stuck to my skin, then he said: ‘O ‘Ā’isha, would you permit me to devote the night to worshipping my Lord?’ So I told him: ‘By Allāh, I love your nearness, but I prefer to respect your dearest wish.’ He then stood erect (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and proceeded to recite the Qur’ān. He wept as he did so, until the upper parts of his chest were drenched with tears. Then he sat down and continued to recite, still weeping, until his sides and loins were drenched with tears. Then he lay down on the floor, still weeping and reciting, until the area next to the ground was also drenched with tears.²⁵

²⁵ For an essentially similar, yet interestingly different version of this lengthy report from ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), see Vol. 5, pp. 132–33.

“Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) eventually came to him and said: ‘By my father and my mother, surely Allāh has forgiven you!’ To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“O Bilāl, should I not be a very thankful servant [*‘abd shakīr*]? Sent down to me this night were the words of divine revelation:

Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for men with understanding minds.

*inna fī khalqī ‘s-samāwāti
wa ‘l-arḍi wa ‘khtilāfi ‘l-laili
wa ‘n-nahāri la āyātīn
li-uli ‘l-albāb.*

[There are signs for] those who remember Allāh, standing and sitting and on their sides, and who reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth: “Our Lord, You have not created this in vain. Glory be to You! So guard us against the torment of the Fire.” (3:190,191)

*alladhīna
yadhkurūna ‘llāha
qiyāman wa qu‘ūdan
wa ‘alā junūbi-him
wa yatafakkarūna
fī khalqī ‘s-samāwāti wa ‘l-arḍ:
Rabba-nā mā khalaqta
hādha bāṭilā:
subhāna-ka fa-qi-nā
‘adhāba ‘n-nār.*

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) also said: “At no time did I ever see Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performing the whole of his nighttime ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*] in a sitting posture—not until he entered the period of old age, when he did start to perform his prayers while sitting down. When he still had thirty or forty verses of a Sūra left to recite, he would stand up and complete their recitation, then he would adopt the bowing posture (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

It was Ya’mar ibn Bishr who said: “I once came to the door of ‘Abdu’llāh ibn Mubārak, after the time of the [prescribed] late evening prayer [*al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*], and I found him performing [voluntary] prayers. I heard him reciting:

When the heaven is split asunder, and when the stars are scattered, and when the seas are made to overflow, and when the tombs are overthrown, then a soul will know what it has sent on ahead, and what it has left behind. (82:1–5)

*idha ‘s-smā’u ‘nfaṭarat:
wa idha ‘l-kawākibu ‘ntatharat:
wa idha ‘l-biḥāru
fujjirat:
wa idha ‘l-qubūru bu‘thirat:
‘alimat nafsūn
mā qaddamat
wa akhkharat.*

—until he reached:

What has deceived you
concerning your Lord,
the All-Generous? (82:6)

mā gharra-ka
bi-Rabbi-ka 'l-
Karīm:

“He paused at this point, but then he kept repeating this same recitation, over and over again, until a good part of the night had elapsed. So I went back home, and returned to his place when the light of dawn had appeared, only to find him still repeating it. When he noticed the light of dawn, he finally stopped. Then he said: ‘Your tolerance and my ignorance! Your tolerance and my ignorance [*ḥilmu-ka wa jahli!*]’ So I went away and left him.”

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The winter is the springtime of the true believer [*mu'min*]. His day gets shorter, so he devotes it to fasting, and his night grows longer, so he devotes it to vigil.

It was Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: “It should always be possible to recognize the reader of the Qur'ān: by his [vigil in the] nighttime, when other people are sleeping; by his [fasting in the] daytime, when other people are breaking fast; by his weeping, when other people are laughing; by his pious caution and restraint [*wara'*], when other people are freely mixing [the lawful with the dubious, or even with the unlawful]; by his humble and modest bearing, when other people are strutting about and parading their self-importance; by his sadness, when other people are behaving merrily; and by his remaining silent, when other people are plunging without hesitation into argument and gossip.



Concerning the special merit of the [voluntary] ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] performed between the two [prescribed] evening prayers [*al-‘ishā’ain*].²⁶

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,²⁷ that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs six cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer [*ṣallā sitta raka‘āt*] after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset [*ba‘da’l-maghrib*], without talking in the space between them, they will be counted as equal in merit to the worshipful service [*‘ibāda*] of twelve whole years.

In the traditional report [*ḥadīth*] of Zaid ibn al-Ḥabbāb, the wording is:

—without talking about anything bad in the space between them....

In the first two cycles [*rak‘atain*], it has also been said, the worshipper is recommended to recite [the Sūras that begin with] “Say: ‘O you unbelievers [*qul yā ayyuha ‘l-kāfirūn*],”²⁸ and “Say: ‘He is Allāh, One! [*qul Huwa ‘llāhu Aḥad*].”²⁹ He should perform these first two cycles

²⁶ That is to say, between the prescribed prayer of sunset [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*] and the prescribed prayer of the late evening [*ṣalāt al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*].

²⁷ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—Abu’l-Faḥ Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abi’l-Fawāris al-Ḥāfiẓ—Bishr—Muḥammad ibn Sulaimān al-Maṣīṣi—Zaid ibn al-Ḥabbāb—‘Umar ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn Kath‘am—Yahyā ibn Abi Bakr—Abū Salama—Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).**

²⁸ This is the Sūra entitled “The Unbelievers [*al-Kāfirūn*],” which reads:

<p>Say: “O unbelievers, I do not worship that which you worship. And you do not worship that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which you worship. Nor will you worship that which I worship. To your religion, and to me my religion!” (109:1–6)</p>	<p><i>qul yā ayyuha ‘l-kāfirūn: lā a‘budu mā ta‘budūn: wa lā antum ‘ābidūna mā a‘bud: wa lā ana ‘ābidun mā ‘ābadtum wa lā antum ‘ābidūna mā a‘bud: la-kum dīnu-kum wa liya dīn.</i></p>
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²⁹ This is the Sūra of Sincere Devotion [*Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ*], which reads:

<p>Say: “He is Allāh, One! Allāh, the Everlasting Refuge! He does not beget, nor was He begotten; and there is none comparable unto Him.” (112:1–4)</p>	<p><i>qul Huwa ‘llāhu Aḥad: Allāhu ‘ṣ-Ṣamad: lam yalid wa lam yūlad: wa lam yakum la-hu kufuwan aḥad.</i></p>
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quickly, because then, it is said, they will be raised up [to heaven] together with the sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*]. Then, as he goes on to perform the rest of them, he may prolong any of their ingredients to whatever extent he wishes.

According to the traditional report [*ḥadīth*] of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs six cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer [*ṣallā sitta raka‘āt*], after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset [*ba‘da’l-maghrib*] and before he has talked to anybody, they will be raised up for him to the Highest Heaven [*‘Ilīyūn*]. He will be just like someone who is present on the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] in the Farthest Mosque [*al-Masjid al-Aqṣā*], and that is better than devoting half a night to vigil.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr,³⁰ Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq [the Champion of Truth] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: “I heard the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

“If someone performs the [prescribed] prayer of sunset [*maghrib*], and then performs four [voluntary cycles] after it, he will be just like someone who performs one Pilgrimage after another [*man ḥajja ba‘da Ḥijja*].”

“So I asked him: ‘What if he performs six [cycles] after it?’ To this he replied:

“He will be forgiven the sins of fifty years.”

Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported³¹ as having said:

If someone secludes himself between the [prescribed prayers of] sunset and late evening [*baina ‘l-maghrib wa ‘l-‘ishā’*], in a congregational mosque [*masjid jamā‘a*], and if he utters no speech at all, apart from [what is required] in performing a ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] or a Qur’ānic recitation, it will be incumbent upon Allāh to have two palatial mansions built for him in the Garden of Paradise. A tour of either of these mansions would take a hundred years to complete. In the area between them, He will cultivate a plantation vast enough to accommodate all the people of this world, if they happened to pay him a visit.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ has informed us, citing

³⁰ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb—Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq [the Champion of Truth] (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

³¹ **Author’s note:** For this report, the chain of transmission [*isnād*] goes back through the following links: Sa‘īd ibn Jubair—Thawbān (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

traditional authority for his report,³² that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

No ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is dearer to Allāh (Exalted is He) than the [prescribed] prayer of sunset [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*]. With it the servant [of the Lord] begins his time of night, and with it he concludes his time of day. In no case may it be abbreviated, neither by the traveler [*musāfir*] nor by the resident [*muqīm*].

If a worshipper duly performs it, and then performs four [voluntary cycles] after it, without engaging in conversation while seated [in the interval], Allāh will have two palatial mansions built for him. Each of these will be crowned with pearls and sapphires, and in the area between them there will be Gardens of Paradise, the description whereof is known only to Allāh (Exalted is He).

If a worshipper duly performs it, and then performs six [voluntary cycles] after it, without engaging in conversation while seated [in the interval], He will grant him forgiveness for [the sins of] forty years.

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to perform twelve cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer between the two [prescribed] evening prayers [*baina ’l-’ishā’ain*].

According to a report transmitted from ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her),³³ Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper performs twenty [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer, between the [prescribed prayers of] sunset and late evening [*baina ’l-maghrib wa ’l-’ishā’*], Allāh will have a house built for him in the Garden of Paradise.

It is traditionally related that Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to perform [voluntary] ritual prayers between the [prescribed prayers of] sunset and late evening [*baina ’l-maghrib wa ’l-’ishā’*], and that he used to say: “It is the time when the night sets in [*nāshī’ at al-lail*].”³⁴

³² **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—Hishām ibn ‘Urwa—‘Ā’isha** (may Allāh be well pleased with her)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

³³ **Author’s note:** For this report, the chain of transmission [*isnād*] goes back through the following links: **Hishām ibn ‘Urwa—his father—‘Ā’isha** (may Allāh be well pleased with her)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

³⁴ Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was alluding to a verse [*āya*] in the Sūra of the Enshrouded One [*Sūrat al-Muzzammil*], the 73rd Sūra of the Qur’ān:

The time when the night sets in is indeed	<i>inna nāshī’ata ’l-laili</i>
the time when impressions are strongest	<i>hiya ashaddu wa’an</i>
and speech most direct. (73:6)	<i>wa aqwamu qilā.</i>

As related by ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Aswad, his paternal uncle once said: “Not once did I pay a visit to ‘Abdu’llāh ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him), without finding him performing the [voluntary] ritual prayer between the [prescribed prayers of] sunset and late evening [*baina ’l-maghrib wa ’l-’ishā’*]. He used to say: ‘It is [all too often] an hour of heedless neglect.’”

It was during it [the interval between the sunset and late evening prayers], some say, that down came [the words of divine revelation]:

Their sides shun their couches, as they call on their Lord in fear and hope. (32:16)	<i>tatajāfā junūbu-hum ‘ani ’l-maḏāji’i yad’ūna Rabba-hum khaufan wa ṭama’ā.</i>
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According to another traditional report, transmitted on the authority of ‘Abdu’llāh ibn Abī Awfā (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper recites, after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset [*maghrib*], [the Sūras beginning with]:

Alif, Lām, Mīm. The revelation of the Book, of which there is no doubt, is from the Lord of All the Worlds.	<i>Alif-Lām-Mīm. tanẓīlu ’l-Kitābi lā raiba fī-hi min Rabbi ’l-’ālamīn.</i>
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—that is to say, the Sūra of Prostration [*Sūrat as-Sajda*],³⁵ and:

Blessed is He in whose Hand is the Sovereignty. ³⁶	<i>tabāraka ’lladhī bi-yadi-hi ’l-mulk.</i>
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—when he comes forth on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], his face will be like the moon on the night when it is at the full [*lailat al-badr*], and he will certainly do justice to that night.”

Regarding these [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*raka’āt*], to which we find so many references in the traditional reports [*akhbār*], it is possible that they are meant to be kept separate from the two cycles of the regular customary prayer [*ar-rak’atāin as-sunna*],³⁷ though it is also possible that they are meant to be performed in combination with the latter.

³⁵ The Sūra of Prostration [*Sūrat as-Sajda*] is the 32nd Sūra of the Qur’ān.

³⁶ This is the first verse [*āya*] of the Sūra of Sovereignty [*Sūrat al-Mulk*], the 67th Sūra of the Qur’ān.

³⁷ See pp. 141–46 below.

**Concerning the two [voluntary] cycles [*rak'atān*]
sometimes performed before the [prescribed] sunset
prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*].**

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was once asked about the two [voluntary] cycles [*rak'atān*] performed before the [prescribed] sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*]. He responded by telling the questioner:

“As far as I am concerned, I do not perform them, but if any man does perform them, there is no harm in his doing so.”

Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was also asked about the performance of those same two cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. He said in reply:

“I never saw anyone perform them during the lifetime of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).” It should be noted, however, that Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) did not forbid their performance.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “During the lifetime of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), we used to perform two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atān*] after the setting of the sun [*ghurūb ash-shams*] and before the [prescribed] ritual prayer of sunset [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*].” [The reporter said:] “So I asked him: ‘Did Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also perform them?’ To this he replied: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) often saw us performing them, but he never directly instructed us to do so, nor did he ever tell us that the practice was forbidden.’”

It was Ibrāhīm an-Nakha‘ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: “Some of the very best of the Companions [*Aṣḥāb*] of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were at one time based in Kūfa, including ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Ibn Mas‘ūd, Ḥudhaifa ibn

al-Yamān, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, Abū Mas‘ūd al-Anṣārī and others (may Allāh be well pleased with them all)—and I never saw a single one of them performing a ritual prayer before the [prescribed prayer of] sunset [*qabla ’l-maghrib*]. Nor were these two particular cycles [*rak‘atain*] ever performed by Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, or ‘Uthmān (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).”



More traditional reports concerning the [voluntary] ritual prayer [ṣalāt] performed between the two [prescribed] evening prayers [al-‘ishā’ain], with special reference to the vision of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Abū Ṭība Karaz ibn Wabra al-Ḥārithī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was one of the *Abdāl* [Spiritual Deputies].³⁸ He is reported³⁹ as having said:

“I once received a visit from a spiritual brother of mine, an inhabitant of the region of Damascus, who presented me with a gift. ‘O Karaz,’ he said to me, ‘accept from me this gift, for it is truly an excellent present!’ So I asked him: ‘O my brother, and who gave you this gift?’ To this he replied: ‘It was given to me by Ibrāhīm at-Taimī (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him),’ so I said: ‘Well, did you ask Ibrāhīm who gave this gift to him?’ ‘Yes, of course,’ said he, then he told me the following story:

“I was sitting in the area in front of the Ka‘ba [in Mecca], and I was engrossed in affirming the Uniqueness of Allāh [*tahlīl*],⁴⁰ in proclaiming His Glory [*tasbīḥ*],⁴¹ and in offering praise to Him [*taḥmīd*].⁴² Then a man came up to me, greeted me with the salutation of peace [*sallama*

³⁸ In the Sixth Discourse of *Revelations of the Unseen [Futūḥ al-Ghaib]*, Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) gives the following explanation of the term *Abdāl*:

Annihilation [*fanā’*] is the aim and object, the final destination of the journey of the saints. This was the direction sought by all previous saints and *Abdāl*: to become extinct to their own will, and let the will of the Almighty and Glorious Truth take its place, as a permanent transformation, lasting until death. That is why they came to be called *Abdāl* [lit: ‘substitutes’] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

³⁹ **Author’s note:** For this report, the chain of transmission goes back through the following links: ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥārithī al-Baṣrī—Sa‘īd ibn Sa‘īd—Abū Ṭība Karaz ibn Wabra al-Ḥārithī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

⁴⁰ See note 10 on p. 9 above.

⁴¹ See note 11 on p. 9 above.

⁴² The Arabic verb *ḥammada*, of which *taḥmīd* is the corresponding verbal noun, means “to extol Allāh, by saying: ‘Praise be to Allāh [al-ḥamdu ‘llāh].’”

‘*alayya*], and seated himself to my right. Well, never in all my days had I seen anyone more handsome in facial features, more handsome in style of attire, more fragrantly perfumed, or with a fairer complexion. So I said: ‘O servant of Allāh, who are you? Where do you come from, and what are you?’ He replied: ‘I am al-Khiḍr.⁴³ I have come to say, “Peace be upon you,” and because I have a feeling of love toward you, for the sake of Allāh. I also come bearing a gift, which I intend to present to you.’

“Well then,” said I, ‘please tell me about this gift of yours. What is it?’ To this al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him) replied: ‘You must recite the following, before the sun rises and spreads its light over the earth, and also before it sets:

- The Sūra of Praise [*Sūrat al-Ḥamd*]⁴⁴—seven times.
- The Sūra that begins with:

Say: “I take refuge with the Lord of mankind.” (114:1)	<i>qul a’ūdhu bi-Rabbi ’n-nās.</i>
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—seven times.

- The Sūra that begins with:

Say: “I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak.” (113:1)	<i>qul a’ūdhu bi-Rabbi ’l-falaq.</i>
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—seven times.

- The Sūra that begins with:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1)	<i>qul Huwa ’llāhu Aḥad.</i>
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—seven times.

- The Sūra that begins with:

Say: “O unbelievers....” (109:1)	<i>qul yā ayyuha ’l-kāfirūn....</i>
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—seven times.

- The Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴⁵—seven times.

You must also say:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| • Glory be to Allāh! | <i>subḥāna ’llāh.</i> |
| • Praise be to Allāh! | <i>al-ḥamdu li’ llāh.</i> |

⁴³ See Vol. 2, note 87 on p. 63.

⁴⁴ The Sūra of Praise [*Sūrat al-Ḥamd*] is another name for the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fāṭihat al-Kitāb*], which begins with the verse [*āya*]:

Praise be to Allāh, Lord of All the Worlds.	<i>al-ḥamdu li’ llāhi Rabbi ’l-’ālamīn.</i>
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⁴⁵ Q. 2:255.

- There is no god but Allāh! *lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*
- Allāh is Supremely Great! *Allāhu Akbar.*

—seven times.

You must invoke blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)—seven times.

You must seek forgiveness for yourself, for your parents, and for all the believing men [*mu' minīn*] and all the believing women [*mu' mināt*]
—seven times.

Immediately after the appeal for forgiveness [*istighfār*], you must say:

O Allāh, my Lord, do with us
and with them,
both in the short term
and in the long term,
in matters of religion,
this world and the hereafter,
that of which You are Capable.
Do not do with us, O our Master,
that of which we are capable!
You are Forgiving, Forbearing,
Generous, Noble, Kind,
Gentle, Compassionate

*Allāhumma Rabbi 'f al bī
wa bi-him
'ājilan
wa ājilan
fi 'd-dīni
wa 'd-dunyā wa 'l-ākhirati
mā Anta la-hu Ahl:
wa lā taf al bi-nā yā Mawlā-nā
mā nahnu la-hu ahl:
inna-ka Ghafūrūn Halīmūn
Jawādūn Karīmūn Barrūn
Ra'ūfun Rahīm.*

—seven times.

“See to it that you carry out this practice without fail, both in the morning and in the evening, for he who gave it to me told me: “You must say it at least once in your lifetime.” When I said to him: ‘I would like you to tell me who gave you this gift,’ he said: ‘It was Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who gave it to me.’

“I then said to al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him): ‘Tell me something. Suppose I see the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in one of my dreams, should I ask him if he gave you this gift?’ So he said to me: ‘Are you doubting my veracity?’ I said: ‘No, by Allāh, but I would love to hear that directly from Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).’

“He then told me: ‘If you wish to see the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in one of your dreams, this is what you need to know: As soon as you have performed the [prescribed] prayer of sunset [*ṣallaita 'l-maghrib*], you must proceed to perform [voluntary] ritual prayers until the time of the [prescribed prayer] of late evening [*al-'ishā'*]

al-ākhirah], without talking to any human being. You must concentrate on the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] in which you are engaged. You must pronounce the salutation [*taslīma*] after each set of two cycles [*rakʿatain*]. In the course of each cycle [*rakʿa*], you must complete the following Qurʾānic recitations:

- the Sūra of Praise [*Sūrat al-Ḥamd*]⁴⁶—one time only, and
- the Sūra that begins with:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1) *qul Huwa ʾllāhu Aḥad.*

—seven times.

You must then perform the [prescribed] ritual prayer of late evening [*ṣalāt al-ʿatama*],⁴⁷ as a member of the congregation [*jamāʿa*]. On no account must you talk to anyone [after that], until you reach your own place of residence, and there perform the odd-numbered prayer [*ṣalāt al-witr*]. You must also perform two cycles of prayer [*rakʿatain*] at the point where you are about to take your sleep, reciting in each cycle [*rakʿa*]:

- the Sūra of Praise [*Sūrat al-Ḥamd*], and
- the Sūra that begins with:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1) *qul Huwa ʾllāhu Aḥad.*

—seven times.

Then you must perform an act of prostration, after the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. While in your posture of prostration [*sujūd*], you must seek forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He)—seven times. You must also say:

- Glory be to Allāh! *subḥāna ʾllāh.*
- Praise be to Allāh! *al-ḥamdu liʾllāh.*
- There is no god but Allāh! *lā ilāha illa ʾllāh.*
- Allāh is Supremely Great! *Allāhu Akbar.*
- There is no might *lā ḥawla*
- nor any power except *wa lā quwwata illā*
- with Allāh, the All-High, *biʾllāhi ʾl-ʿAlīyī ʾl-*
- the Almighty. *ʿAẓīm.*

—seven times.

Then you must raise your head from the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], hold yourself steady in a sitting position, lift up your hands, and say:

○ Ever-Living One, *yā Ḥayyu*
○ Self-Sustaining One! *yā Qayyūm.*

⁴⁶ See note 44 on p. 34 above.

⁴⁷ The term *ṣalāt al-ʿatama* is synonymous with *ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ al-ākhirah*. See p. 139 below.

O Possessor of Majesty and Honor!	yā Dha 'l-Jalāli wa 'l-Ikrām
O God of the first and the last [of mankind]!	yā Ilāha 'l-awwalīna wa 'l-ākhirīn.
O All-Merciful of this world and the hereafter,	yā Raḥmāna 'd-dunyā wa 'l-ākhirā
and All-Compassionate of both worlds!	wa Raḥīma-humā
O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!	yā Rabb yā Rabb yā Rabb.
O Allāh, O Allāh, O Allāh!	yā Allāh yā Allāh yā Allāh.

“Then you must stand erect, and repeat the same invocations in your upright posture [*qiyām*]. Then you must prostrate yourself again, and repeat the same invocations in your posture of prostration [*sujūd*]. Then you must raise your head. At this point, you may lie down to sleep wherever you wish, facing the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka‘ba] and invoking blessings on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). You must keep this up until sleep overwhelms you.’

“I said to him [to al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him)]: ‘I would like you to tell me from whom you heard this prayer of supplication [*du‘ā‘*].’ So he said to me: ‘Are you doubting my veracity?’ I said: ‘By the One who sent Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) as a Prophet bearing the Truth [*bi‘l-Ḥaqqi Nabīyyan*], I am not doubting your veracity.’ He then went on (peace be upon him) to tell me: ‘I was in the presence of Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) when he was taught this prayer of supplication [*du‘ā‘*], and I was beside him when it was entrusted to him, so I learned it from the One who taught it to him.’”

“Ibrāhīm continued: ‘So I said to him: “Tell me about the spiritual reward of this prayer of supplication [*du‘ā‘*],” and al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him) told me: “When you meet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), you should ask him about its spiritual reward.’”

“Ibrāhīm went on to say: ‘So I did what al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him) had told me to do. I kept invoking blessings upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) while I lay in my bed, and sleep departed from me, due to my intense delight with all that al-Khiḍr (peace be upon him) had taught me, and the hope of meeting the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). I was still in that state when morning came, so I performed the [prescribed] ritual prayer of dawn [*ṣallaitu ‘l-fajr*], then sat in my prayer niche [*miḥrāb*] until the full light of day had appeared. Then I performed the [voluntary] forenoon prayer [*ṣallaitu ‘d-ḍuhā*],

saying to myself: “If I am still alive tonight, I shall do this all over again, just as I did it last night!”

“It was then that sleep overwhelmed me, and the angels came and carried me away. They took me inside the Garden of Paradise, where I saw palatial mansions built of red rubies, and palatial mansions built of green emeralds, and palatial mansions built of white pearls. I also saw rivers of honey and milk and wine. In one of those palatial mansions, I saw a maiden looking down at me, and I noticed that the radiance of her face was brighter than the light of the unclouded sun. She had locks of hair that fell to the ground, all the way down from the top of the palatial mansion. So I asked the angels who had brought me inside: “To whom does this palace belong, and to whom does this maiden belong?” They replied: “To someone who performs the kind of good work you perform.”

“Needless to say, they did eventually remove me from those Gardens of Paradise, but not until they had given me some of its fruits to eat, and quenched my thirst with some of that refreshing drink. Only then did they take me away, and return me to the spot where I had been before.

“It was then that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) came to me, accompanied by seventy Prophets and seventy rows of angels, each row extending all the way from the East to the West. He greeted me with the salutation of peace [*sallama ‘alayya*], and took me by my hand, so I said: “O Messenger of Allāh (may Allāh bless you and give you peace!), al-Khiḍr has told me that he heard this saying [*ḥadīth*] from you.” The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by saying: “Yes, al-Khiḍr has told you the truth, but then every story he tells is always true. He is the savant [*‘ālim*] of the people of the earth. He is the chieftain of the Spiritual Deputies [*ra’īs al-Abdāl*], and he is one of Allāh’s soldiers [*junūd*] upon the earth.”

“I then said: “O Messenger of Allāh, if someone does exactly as I have done, yet does not see what I have seen in my dream, will he nevertheless be given something of that which I have been given?” To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): “By the One who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth [*bi’l-Ḥaqqi Nabīyyan*], that person will surely receive forgiveness for all the major sins [*kabā’ir*] he has ever committed, and Allāh will relieve him of His anger and His displeasure.

By the One who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth [*bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabīyyan*], if anyone matches this performance [of yours], even if he does not see the Garden of Paradise in one of his dreams, he will surely be given something comparable to that which you have been given.

““An angelic herald will proclaim in the heaven above: “Allāh has already granted forgiveness, not only to the one who has worked so hard for his [the Prophet’s] sake, but to his entire Community [*Umma*] (Allāh bless him and give him peace), consisting of all the believing men [*mu’minīn*] and believing women [*mu’minat*] in the East and in the West. [The recording angel called] the Companion of the Left [*Ṣāhib ash-Shimāl*] will be instructed not to record anything against any one of them, in the way of misdeeds, until the year that lies ahead.””

“Ibrāhīm continued further: ‘So then I said to him: “Let my father and my mother be your ransom, O Messenger of Allāh! By the One who has allowed me to behold your beauty, and has shown me the Garden of Paradise, am I to understand that this will be that person’s spiritual reward?” He said: “Yes, he will be given all of that!” So I said: “O Messenger of Allāh, it is surely most important for all the believing men [*mu’minīn*] and believing women [*mu’minat*] to learn this practice, and to teach it to others, since it is endowed with spiritual reward and merit of such magnitude!”

“The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: “By the One who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth [*bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabīyyan*], no one can do this, unless Allāh has created him as a fortunate individual, and no one can neglect to do it, unless Allāh has created him as an unlucky wretch.” So I said: “O Messenger of Allāh, will anything else be given to someone who performs this work?”

“The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: “By the One who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth [*bi'l-Ḥaqqi Nabīyyan*], if someone performs this work for just one night, good deeds will be record in his favor, to the count of every drop of rain that has fallen from the sky, from the moment when Allāh created this world till the Day [of Resurrection] when the blast shall be blown on the Trumpet. By the same token, bad deeds will be erased from his record, to the number of every seed that has ever grown in the earth. These benefits will accrue to him, as well as to all the believing men [*mu’minīn*] and believing

women [*mu`mināt*] who have put this advice into practice, whether in ancient or in later times.””

As reported by al-A`raj, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣallā rak`atain*] on the night of Friday, the Day of Congregation [*lailat al-Jum`a*], reciting in each cycle [*rak`a*]:

- the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]

—one time only, and:

- the Sūra that begins with:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1) *qul Huwa ’llāhu Aḥad.*

—fifteen times, and if he says, at the end of his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]:

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad, *Allāhumma ṣalli `alā*
the unlettered Prophet! *Muḥammadini `n-Nabiyyi `l-ummī.*

—one thousand times, he will see me in one of his dreams. What is more, he will see me before the next Friday [*Jum`a*] is over. If someone sees me [in one of his dreams], it means that he is assured of the Garden of Paradise, and that he will be forgiven his former and his later sins.



Traditional references to the [voluntary] ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] performed after the [prescribed] late evening prayer [*al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*].

On this subject, as we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’,⁴⁸ it was Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said:

“If a worshipper performs four [voluntary cycles], after the [prescribed] ritual prayer of late evening [*al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*], he will be just like one who arrives in time to experience the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] in the Sacred Mosque [*Masjid al-Ḥarām*].”

A similar saying has been transmitted from Ka‘b al-Aḥbār, namely:

“If a worshipper performs four [voluntary cycles], after the [prescribed] ritual prayer of late evening [*al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*], and with a fine Qur’ānic recitation, he will be entitled to a spiritual reward like that of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].”

In other words, it will be as if he had actually performed his ritual prayer on the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ has also informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,⁴⁹ that the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper performs two [voluntary] cycles [*rak‘atain*], after the [prescribed] ritual prayer of late evening [*al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*], reciting:

- the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*]—one time only, and
- the Sūra that begins with:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1) *qul Huwa ’llāhu Aḥad.*

—twenty times, Allāh will have two palatial mansions built for him in the Garden of Paradise, so impressive that the people of Paradise will point them out as landmarks!

⁴⁸ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

⁴⁹ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdī’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—Thābit al-Bannānī—Anas ibn Mālik** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Concerning the nighttime prayer called *witr*,⁵⁰ and the time of night most suitable for its performance.

As for the nighttime prayer called *witr* [“odd-numbered”], the time most suitable for its performance must be the last part of the night, in view of all that has been explained above, concerning the special merit of keeping vigil [*qiyām*] during the last part of the night. For further confirmation of this, we may adduce the following evidence:

As we learn from one traditional report, transmitted by Nāfi‘ on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), a man once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about [the ritual prayer performed during] the night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], so he said:

[The nighttime ritual prayer should be performed] in sets of two cycles [*mathnā mathnā*], so, if you are afraid [of not finishing before] the dawn, one [separate cycle] will make what has preceded it count as your *witr*.

‘Umar al-Fārūq (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to perform the *witr* prayer during the last part of the night, whereas Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq [the Champion of Truth] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) performed his *witr* during the first part of the night. This came to the notice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so he asked the two of them about it.

“When do you perform the *witr* prayer?” he said first to Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him), and the latter replied: “In the first part

⁵⁰ The term *witr* [lit., odd number] is used to denote the ritual prayer, consisting of an odd number of cycles, that is performed after the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘ishā’*] and before the dawn of day [*ṣubḥ*]. The number of cycles is usually three, five, or seven, but may be as many as thirteen. Performance of the *witr* prayer is considered customary [*sunna*] by most traditional authorities, with the exception of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), who took a stricter view. According to the Ḥanafī school [*madhhab*] of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], the observance of the *witr* prayer is classed as necessary [*wājib*]. (See: A.J. Wensinck, art. WITR in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*; and: Thomas Patrick Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, art. WITR.)

of the night, before I go to sleep.” Then he asked ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him): “When do you perform the *witr* prayer?” and he received the answer: “During the last part of the night.” The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) then said, with reference to Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him): “This one is cautious,” and with reference to ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him): “This one is strong.”

‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said: “The shrewd ones [*akyās*] perform the *witr* prayer during the first part of the night, while the stong [*aqwiya*] perform it during the last part of the night, and the latter practice is more meritorious.” There are some who maintain, however, that the first part of the night is actually more meritorious, in view of the practice of Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

‘Uthmān [ibn ‘Affān] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “As for myself, I perform the *witr* prayer during the first part of the night. If I wake up [later], I perform one cycle of ritual prayer [*rak‘a*], thereby converting my [odd-numbered] *witr* into part of an even-numbered set. I can only compare it to a stray she-camel, whom I am reuniting with her sisters. Then I perform an odd cycle at the very end of my ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].” It is widely known, in fact, that he made it his practice (may Allāh be well pleased with him) to keep vigil throughout the whole of the night, while performing one single cycle of prayer [*rak‘a*], in which he would recite the entire Qur’ān. That was his *witr* prayer.

Abū Huraira is reported as having said: “My bosom friend [*khalīlī*], Abu’l-Qāsim⁵¹ (Allāh bless him and give him peace) alerted me to the value of three practices: (1) the *witr* prayer before going to sleep, (2) devoting three days out of every month to fasting, and (3) the two cycles of the forenoon prayer [*rak‘atayī d-duḥā*]. [The early performance of the *witr* is recommended] especially in the case of someone who is afraid of not waking up until after the rising of the dawn, since the best course for him is to sleep on the *witr*.”

‘Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: “The *witr* can be approached from any of these three angles: (1) If you wish, you may perform an odd number of prayer-cycles in the first part

⁵¹ Abu’l-Qāsim [the Father of al-Qāsim] is one of the names of the Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), assumed in memory of his son, who died in infancy.

of the night, then [perform any later nighttime prayers in] sets of two cycles [*rak'atain rak'atain*]. (2) If you wish, you may perform one single cycle [*rak'a*] as a *witr* prayer [before going to sleep]. Then, if you wake up [later in the night], you may add another to it [to make an even pair]. You may then perform an odd number of cycles during the last part of the night. (3) If you wish, you may postpone the *witr* until the very end of your [nighttime performance of the] ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”

As reported on the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdi’llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone is afraid that he may not wake up during the last part of the night, let him perform the *witr* prayer in the first part of the night, then let him go to sleep. On the other hand, if someone has a strong urge to get up during the last part of the night, let him postpone it [till then]. Vigil in the last part of the night is a practice restricted [to a few], and therefore more meritorious.

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: “As soon as Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had performed his *witr* prayer, in the last part of the night, he would approach his wives, if he needed to do so; otherwise, he would lie down and take a nap in his place of prayer [*muṣallā*], until Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) arrived to summon him with the call to prayer.”

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) also said: “Of the night as a whole, Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sometimes performed the *witr* prayer in the first part, and sometimes in the middle section, and the very latest time for his *witr* was toward the pre-dawn interlude [*saḥar*].”

According to one traditional report [*khabar*], Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would perform the *witr* at the time of the [pre-dawn] call to prayer [*adhān*], then he would perform the two [customary] cycles [*rak'atain*] at the time of the final announcement [*iqāma*] [immediately before the prescribed prayer of daybreak].

The Companions [*Aṣḥāb*] of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would perform the [prescribed] prayer of late evening [*al-‘ishā’*], then they would perform two [voluntary] cycles [*rak'atain*], then four [more of the same]. After that, if anyone saw fit to do so, he would perform the *witr* prayer, and if anyone was ready for sleep, he would go to sleep.

**Two opinions concerning the annulment
of the *witr* prayer, when someone performs it
in the first part of the night, then proceeds
to perform the prayers called *tahajjud*.⁵²**

If someone performs the *witr* prayer during the first part of the night, then gets up [after some sleep] to perform the prayers called *tahajjud*, must he annul his *witr*, or may he perform whatever additional prayers he wishes, without annulling the *witr*? On this question, there are two conflicting versions of the doctrine attributed to Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

According to one account, he is not required to invalidate the *witr*. In the version related by al-Faḍl ibn Ziyād, he [Imām Aḥmad] said: “While performance of the *witr* during the last part of the night is more meritorious, it may happen that a man is afraid of sleeping [through that period], in which case he ought to perform the *witr* during the first part of the night. Then, if he does get up during the last part of the night, he should perform the ritual prayer in sets of two cycles [*rakʿatain rakʿatain*], but he should not perform the *witr* again.” According to the other account, however, he must actually render it invalid.

“I once asked Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal],” said al-Faḍl ibn Ziyād: ‘Do you see him as having to invalidate the *witr*?’ ‘No,’ he replied, ‘and even if he must render it invalid, that is hardly a serious problem. ‘Umar, ‘Alī, Usāma, Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Abbās and Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with them)—all of them did that!’”

Here is a step-by-step description of what is involved in the invalidation

⁵² The term *tahajjud* is sometimes synonymous with *ṣalāt al-lail* [the prayer of night vigil]. In some contexts, however, it refers to the voluntary prayers performed after the compulsory prayer of late evening [*ṣalāt al-‘ishāʿ*]. The corresponding verb, in the imperative form *tahajjud*, occurs in Q. 17:78 and 17:79.

[*naqd*] and annulment [*faskh*] of the *witr* prayer [as a separate, odd-numbered entity]:

- The person concerned performs the *witr* in the first part of the night, as a ritual prayer consisting of one single cycle.
- He goes to sleep.
- He gets up in the course of the night, in order to perform more ritual prayers.
- He performs one single cycle of ritual prayer [*rak' a wāhida*], with the specific intention that it should invalidate [the separate, odd-numbered status of] his previous *witr*, and convert it into the first of two elements forming a pair.
- He pronounces the concluding salutation [to mark the completion of this latest cycle of prayer], so now all his prayers up to this point have become even-numbered.
- He may then go on to perform further prayers, as many as he wishes, so long as they are in sets of two cycles [*mathnā mathnā*].
- Finally, he may perform the *witr* before the rising of the dawn [*ṭulū' al-fajr*], by completing one single, unpaired cycle of ritual prayer [*rak' a wāhida*].

That is all quite clear, in light of the practice of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), which we have described above [in the preceding subsection.]

It is not permissible to leave the first *witr* in its original condition, and then perform the *witr* a second time, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

There must not be two performances of the *witr* in a single night.

As for the case where someone does not render his *witr* invalid, but simply goes on to perform whatever [even-numbered] prayers he wishes, we have already explained the permissibility thereof.



Concerning the supplication [*du‘ā’*] to be offered at a certain point in the *witr* prayer.

In the final cycle [*rak‘a*] of the *witr* prayer, at the point where he raises his head from the bowing posture [*rukū‘*], the worshipper should offer the following supplication [*du‘ā’*]:

O Allāh, we appeal to You for help,
and guidance, and forgiveness.
We believe in You,
and in You we place all our trust.
We extol You
for all that is good.
We give thanks to You,
and we are not ungrateful to You.
We dismiss and abandon those
who sinfully disobey You.

O Allāh, You Alone do we worship.
To You we pray
and make prostration,
and we are quick to serve
and obey You.
We hope for Your mercy
and we dread Your chastisement.
Surely Your extreme chastisement
will be applied to the unbelievers.

O Allāh, guide me among those
whom You have guided aright.
Pardon me among those
to whom You have granted pardon.
Take care of me among those
of whom You have taken care.
Bless me among those
to whom You have
granted Your blessing,
and guard me against the evil
of that which You have decreed.
Surely You make judgment,

*Allāhumma innā nasta‘īnu-ka
wa nastahdī-ka wa nastaghfiru-ka
wa nu‘minu bi-ka
wa natawakkalu ‘alai-ka
wa nuthnī
‘alai-ka ‘l-khaira kulla-hu
nashkuru-ka
wa lā nakfiru-ka
wa nakhlā‘u wa natrukū
man yafjuru-ka*

*Allāhumma iyyā-ka na‘budu
wa la-ka nuṣallī
wa nasjudu
wa ilai-ka nas‘ā
wa nahfidu
narjū rahmata-ka
wa nakhshā ‘adhāba-ka
inna ‘adhāba-ka ‘l-jidda
bi‘l-kuffāri mulḥaq.*

*Allāhumma ‘hdi-nī
fī-man hadāita
wa ‘āfi-nī
fī-man ‘afāita
wa tawalla-nī
fī-man tawallāita
wa bārik lī
fī-man
ā‘ṭāita
wa qī-nī sharra
mā qaḍāita
inna-ka taqḍī*

and judgment is not
made against You.
Those whom You treat as friends
are surely not to be despised,
and those whom You
treat as enemies
are not worthy of respect.
Blessed are You, Our Lord,
and Exalted are You!

O Allāh, I take refuge
with Your good pleasure
from Your disapproval,
and with Your pardon
from Your punishment,
and I take refuge with You
from You!
I can never extol You enough, for
You are as You have
extolled Yourself.

wa lā yuqḍā
‘alai-k.
inna-hu lā yadhillu
man wālaita
wa lā
ya‘izzu
man ‘ādaita
tabāarakata Rabba-nā
wa ta‘ālait.

Allāhumma innī a‘ūdhu
bi-riḍā-ka
min sukhṭi-ka
wa bi-‘afwi-ka
min ‘uqūbati-ka
wa a‘ūdhu bi-ka
min-ka
lā aḥṣī thanā’an ‘alai-ka
Anta ka-mā athnaita
‘alā Nafsi-k.

If the supplicant chooses to add more to this, it is permissible for him to do so. He should then pass his hand over his face, according to one of two accounts [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine]. According to the other, he should pass it over his breast.

If he is acting as prayer leader [*imām*] in the month of Ramaḍān, he must use the first-person plural in every appropriate instance, saying: “Guide *us* and grant *us* well-being [*ihdi-nā wa ‘āfi-nā*],” and so on through to the end of the supplication.



**Concerning the best course to be followed
by someone who is overcome by drowsiness
[nu‘ās], while devoting the night
to ritual prayer [yuṣalli ‘l-lail].**

If a worshipper is one of those who devote the night to ritual prayer [yuṣalli ‘l-lail], but he is overcome by drowsiness [nu‘ās], the best course for him is to get some sleep. This advice is based on the traditional report, recorded in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ*'s,⁵³ according to which ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) said that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If one of you is overcome by drowsiness, while performing the ritual prayer [ṣalāt], let him lie down to rest until sleep departs from him, for, if he prays while he is feeling drowsy, perhaps he will go away to seek forgiveness, since he may attribute the blame to himself.

As reported on the authority of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Ṣuhaib, it was Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once entered the mosque [masjid], where he noticed that a rope had been strung between the two columns. ‘What is this?’ he exclaimed, so they told him: ‘It was put there for Zainab to use, while she is performing the ritual prayer. Whenever she feels sluggish or listless, she grasps it with her hand.’ He said: ‘Unfasten it!’ Then he went on to say (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“Let each one of you perform the prayer while he has the energy [nashāt] for it, then, if he feels too sluggish or listless, let him sit down and take a rest.”

According to a report from ‘Urwa, ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once had with her a woman from the tribe of Banī Asad. When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) came in, he asked: “Who is this?” She said: “This is so-and-so, who never

⁵³ See n. 14 on p. 12 above.

sleeps in the night.” It was then that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

All of you must do as much work as you are capable of doing, for, by Allāh, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has never had enough until you have had enough!

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: “The work that is dearest to Allāh (Exalted is He) is that which is pursued with diligence and perseverance by its practitioner, even if it does not amount to very much. Whenever Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) instructed them to do as much work and they were capable of doing, they [his Companions] used to say: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, we are not in the same situation as you. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has forgiven you your earlier and your later sins.’ This would make him feel so angry that it showed on his face.”

It can thus be stated that, in the case of a worshipper who is overwhelmed by sleep, to the point where it distracts him from the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] and the remembrance of Allāh [*dhikr*], the Sunna⁵⁴ requires him to sleep until he is relieved of the burden of slumber, so that he feels completely ready for worshipful service [*‘ibāda*], and can fully understand what he is saying.

Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is said to have disapproved of sleep in a sitting position.

In the words of one traditional report [*khabar*], we are told: “Do not challenge the night [by trying to go through it without any sleep at all].”

Among the righteous [*ṣāliḥīn*] there were some who deliberately trained themselves to sleep [at an early time], in order to be fortified thereby in the middle of the night. There were others who disapproved of any deliberate attempt to sleep, and who did not sleep at all until slumber overwhelmed them with irresistible force.

It is said that Wahb ibn Munabbih al-Yamānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) did not once lay his side on the ground, in all of thirty years. He kept a cushion [*miswara*] made of leather, on which he would place his breast, when sleep overwhelmed him. Then, after dozing off for a few minutes [*khafaqa khafaqāt*], he would wake up with a start and resume his vigil. He would often say: “I would much prefer to see a devil [*shaitān*] in my house, rather than to see a pillow [*wisāda*] in it.” (By this he meant: “because the pillow would represent an invitation to sleep.”)

⁵⁴ The Sunna is the customary practice established by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). See also n. 57 on p. 52 below.

When one of the righteous was asked to give a description of the *Abdāl* [Spiritual Deputies],⁵⁵ he said: “Their eating is of sheer necessity, their sleep is induced by overwhelming force, their speech is in response to urgent need, their silence is a mark of wisdom [*ḥikma*], and their knowledge is a form of power [*qudra*].”

When another of the righteous was asked to give a description of those who fear the Lord [*al-khāʾifīn*], he said: “Their diet is the diet of the sick, and their sleep is the sleep of the drowned.”

One’s attention should not be primarily focused, however, on the spiritual states and actions of the righteous [*ṣāliḥīn*], but rather on that which has been reported concerning Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). That is where reliance should be placed, until the servant [of the Lord] moves into a spiritual condition by which he is distinctly singled out from others.

According to Umm Salama (may Allāh be well pleased with her), ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: “Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asked: ‘Which kind of work is the most meritorious?’ He replied:

“[The most meritorious kind of work is] that which is most diligently and persistently performed, even if it does not amount to very much.”

As reported on the authority of ʿAlqama, ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: “For Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] was a constant practice. That is why Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to keep vigil during various segments of the night. On one night, it would be for half of the night; on one night, for a third of it; on one night, for half of the night, plus half of one sixth of it. He would sometimes keep vigil for one quarter of the night, and no more than that. He would sometimes keep vigil for one sixth of the night, and that would be enough. All of this is mentioned in the Sūra of the Enshrouded One [*Sūrat al-Muzzammil*].”⁵⁶

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

Devote some part of the night to ritual prayer, even if only as long as it takes to milk a sheep [*ṣalli mina ʾl-laili wa law qadra ḥalbi shāt*].

⁵⁵ See n. 18 on p. 33 above.

⁵⁶ The Sūra of the Enshrouded One [*Sūrat al-Muzzammil*] is the 73rd Sūra of the Qurʾān.

That could be the time it takes to perform four cycles of prayer [*raka'āt*], or it may only be enough for two cycles [*rak'atain*].

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atān*], performed by the servant [of the Lord] in the middle of the night, are better than this world and all that it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community [*Ummatī*], I would have made them obligatory.

All of this was intended to make it easy for his Community [*Umma*] to keep night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] and to practice worshipful service [*'ibāda*]. He did not wish it to be burdensome for them, and for worshipful service to be unpleasant for them, so that they would become weary and bored. Far from it! He simply steered them (Allāh bless him and give him peace) toward the keeping of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], by mentioning its excellent merit and its spiritual reward, so that they would not confine themselves exclusively to the obligatory religious duties [*farā'id*] and established customary practices [*sunan*].⁵⁷

For the keeping of vigil, one third is the fraction of the night that is most strongly recommended, while the least recommended is one sixth. This is because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) never once kept vigil throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always take some sleep in the course of it. Nor did he ever sleep throughout the whole of a night until morning. He would always keep vigil during some part of it, as we have explained.

It has been said that the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] of the first part of the night is for those who observe *tahajjud*;⁵⁸ the vigil [*qiyām*] kept in the middle part of it is for the humbly devout [*qānitīn*]; the vigil kept in the last part of it is for worshippers devoted to the ritual prayer [*muṣallīn*]; and the vigil kept at the break of dawn [*qiyām al-fajr*] is for the heedless.

Yūsuf ibn Mihrān (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: "Beneath the Heavenly Throne [*'Arsh*], as I have been informed, there is an angel in the shape of a rooster [*ḍik*]. Its talons are of pearl and its spurs of green topaz. When the first third of

⁵⁷ The term *sunna* (of which *sunan* is the plural form) may be applied to a particular practice recommended by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as well as to his exemplary conduct in general. Although there are no capital letters in the Arabic script, it is convenient to mark the distinction, in transliteration, between the specific *sunna/sunan* and the general *Sunna*.

⁵⁸ See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

the night has elapsed, it flaps its wings, crows and says: 'Let those who pray [*muṣallūn*] arise!' When half of the night has gone by, it again flaps its wings, crows and says: 'Let those who observe *tahajjud* arise!' Then, when two thirds of the night have passed, it once more flaps its wings, crows and says: 'Let the humbly devout [*qānitūn*] arise!' Finally, when the dawn breaks, it flaps its wings, crows and says: 'Let the heedless now arise, bearing the weight of their sins!'"

It was one of the truly wise [*ʿarīfīn*] who said: "During the watches of the night [*ashḥār*], Allāh (Exalted is He) looks into the hearts of those who are vigilantly wakeful, and He fills their hearts with radiant lights. The benefits accrue to their hearts, so they become enlightened. Then the beneficial effects spread from their hearts to the hearts of the negligent and heedless."

It has been related that Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed [*awḥā*] these words to one of the champions of the truth [*ṣiddīqīn*], by way of inspiration: "Among My servants, I have some servants who love Me, and whom I love. They yearn for Me, and I yearn for them. They remember Me, and I remember them. They look toward Me, and I look toward them. So, if you follow their example, I shall love you too, but if you turn away from them, I shall despise you."

"O my Lord," he said, "what is their distinctive feature?" His Lord replied: "They tend the shadows by day, just as the caring shepherd tends his flocks. They yearn for the setting of the sun, just as the birds yearn for their nests around the time of sunset. Then, when the night lowers its veil upon them, and the darkness becomes pervasive, and the mattresses are spread, and the couches are prepared, and every friend forsakes his friend, they direct their footsteps toward Me, and stretch their faces toward Me. They whisper to Me in My way of speaking, and they coax Me with My kind of grace.

"Between one who is crying and one who is weeping, between one who is moaning and one who is complaining, between one who is standing and one who is sitting, between one who is bowing [*rāki*'] and one who is making prostration [*sājid*], within My sight is whatever they are suffering for My sake, and within My hearing is whatever they are complaining about because of My love.

"First of all, I shall give them beams of My light, projected into their

hearts, so they will get to know about Me, as I know all about them. As for My second gift, even if the seven heavens and all that they contain were [weighted against them] in their balances, I would reduce the weight thereof to the point of insignificance. As for My third gift, I shall turn My noble countenance toward them. Then, as you will see, when I turn My noble countenance toward someone, that person will recognize one of the gifts I intend to give him.”



Concerning the observance of vigil [*qiyām*] throughout the whole of the night.

As for the keeping of vigil [*qiyām*] throughout the whole of the night, that is the practice of the strong, of those who have already been assured of providential care [*ināya*] from Him, those for whom custodial protection [*riāya*] has been permanently established, those whose hearts have been enveloped by enabling guidance [*tawfiq*], by the light of Divine Majesty [*Jalāl*] and, then again, of Divine Beauty [*Jamāl*].

According to traditional reports, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to enliven the night by performing a single cycle [*rak‘a*] of ritual prayer, in which he would recite the whole of the Qur‘ān, from beginning to end. (We have mentioned this in a previous subsection.⁵⁹)

Tradition also tells of forty men, from among the Successors [*Tābi‘ūn*], who used to keep vigil throughout the entire night, performing the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-ghadāh*] with the ritual ablution of the last evening prayer [*wuḍū‘ al-ishā‘ al-ākhirā*]. They made this their practice for forty years. The traditional reports concerning them are of verified authenticity, and have been widely disseminated. Here are the names of some of them:

Sa‘īd ibn Jubair, Ṣafwān ibn Salīm, Abū Ḥāzim and Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir (of the people of Medina); Fuḍail ibn ‘Iyāḍ and Wahb ibn al-Ward (of the people of Mecca); Ṭāwūs and Wahb ibn Munabbih (of the people of Yemen); ar-Rabī‘ ibn Khaitham and al-Ḥakam (of the people of Kūfa); Abū Sulaimān ad-Dārānī and ‘Alī ibn Bakkār (of the people of Damascus); Abū ‘Abdu’llāh al-Khawwāṣ and Abū ‘Āsim (of the people of ‘Abadān); Ḥabīb Abū Aḥmad and Abū Jā‘iz al-Salmānī (of the people of Persia); Mālik ibn Dīnār, Sulaimān at-Taimī, Zaid ar-Ruqāshī, Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit, and Yaḥyā al-Bakkār (of the people of Baṣra).

It would take too long to list all the others. May Allāh bestow His mercy and His good pleasure upon them all.

⁵⁹ See p. 43 above.

**On how a person should extricate himself
from a state of utter negligence, in which mistakes
and sins prevent him from keeping night vigil
[*qiyām al-lail*].**

Let us now consider the predicament of someone whose heedless neglect has reached the utmost extreme, whose serious mistakes have hemmed him in from all sides, and whose errors and sins have bound him in chains, thereby preventing him from keeping night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*]. We are speaking of someone who, despite this condition, would dearly love to keep his vigil, and to enter the company of the humbly obedient [*qāniṭīn*], of those who seek forgiveness in the watches of the night [*ashār*].⁶⁰ In order to extricate himself from his terrible predicament, this is what he must do:

He must beg forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He), three times, whenever he is ready for sleep, and whenever he lies down to rest. Then he must recite:

In the Name of Allāh,
the All-Merciful,
the All-Compassionate.

*Bismi' llāhi 'r-
Raḥmāni 'r-
Raḥīm.*

Then he must recite ten verses [*āyāt*] from the beginning of the Sūra of the Cave [*Sūrat al-Kahf*], and ten from the last part of the same. He must also recite [the last part of the Sūra of the Cow (*Sūrat al-Baqara*), beginning with the words]:

The Messenger believes in that
which has been sent down to him
from his Lord,
and so do the believers. (2:285)

*āmana 'r-Rasūlu bi-mā
unzila ilai-hi
min Rabbi-hi
wa 'l-mu' minūn.*

—and [the Sūra that begins with]:

Say: “O unbelievers.... (109:1)

qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn....

⁶⁰ This is a clear allusion to several verses [*āyāt*] of the Qur'ān, notably 3:17.

—for then Allāh (Exalted is He) will awaken him and prepare him for the night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], through His all-encompassing grace, His all-embracing forgiveness, and His all-inclusive care for the true believers [*mu'minīm*] among His servants.

He must also say:

O Allāh, awaken me in the hours
that are dearest to You,
and employ me in the deeds
that are dearest to You,
that will draw me
most closely to You,
and keep me far removed
from Your displeasure.
I am begging You,
so You will grant what I ask.
I am seeking Your forgiveness,
so You will forgive me.
I am beseeching You,
so You will answer my plea.

O Allāh, let me not feel safe
from Your cunning,
and do not entrust me
to anyone but You.
Do not deprive me
of Your protection,
let me not forget
Your remembrance,
and do not include me
among the heedless.

Allāhumma aiqiz-nī
fi aḥabbi 's-sā'āti ilai-ka
wa 'sta'mil-nī
bi-aḥabbi 'l-a'māli ladai-k:
allatī tuqarribu-nī
ilai-ka zulfā
wa yub'idu-nī
min sukhṭi-ka bu'dā.
as'alu-ka
fa-tu'ṭiya-nī
astaghfiru-ka
fa-taghfira lī
ad'ū-ka
fatastajiba lī.

Allāhumma lā
tu'min-nī makra-ka
wa lā tuwalli-nī
ghaira-ka
wa lā tarfa'
'an-nī sitra-ka
wa lā tunsī-nī
dhikra-ka
wa lā taj'al-nī
mina 'l-ghāfilīn.

—for it is said that, if someone pronounces these words, when he is about to go to sleep, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will send down to him three angels, who will arouse him for the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. Then, if he performs the prayer and offers a supplication [*ṣallā wa da'ā*], they will say “*Āmīn*” to his supplication [*du'ā'*]. Even if he does not get up to pray, the angels will worship in the air, and the spiritual reward of their act of worship [*ibāda*] will be recorded in his favor.

He should also repeat the words mentioned in the following quotation, since the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

If someone positively enjoys waking up in the course of the night, let him say, at the moment when he lies down to rest:

O Allāh,
arouse me from my couch,
to remember You,
to thank You,
to perform Your prayer,
to seek Your forgiveness,
to recite Your Book,
and to serve You well.

Allāhumma 'b'ath-nī
min madja 'i-nī
li-dhikri-ka wa shukri-ka
wa ṣalāti-ka
wa 'stighfāri-ka
wa tilāwati Kitābi-ka
wa ḥusni
'ibādati-k.

Then let him proclaim the Glory of Allāh [*li-yusabbih*],⁶¹ thirty-three times. Let him give praise to Allāh [*li-yuḥammad*],⁶² thirty-three times. Let him also proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*li-yukabbir*],⁶³ thirty-three times.

If he prefers, he may say, twenty-five times:

Glory be to Allāh,
and praise be to Allāh,
and there is no god but Allāh,
and Allāh is Supremely Great!

subḥāna 'llāhi
wa 'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi
wa lā ilāha illa 'llahu
wa 'llāhu Akbar.

—since that will be simpler for him, and it will add up to a total of one hundred component parts, counting from the beginning.

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: “Whenever Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was on the point of going to sleep, resting his cheek on his right hand, and recognizing that he might die in the course of that very night, these are the last words he would say:

O Allāh,
Lord of the seven heavens
and Lord of the Mighty Throne,
Our Lord
and the Lord of every thing,
Revealer of the Torah, the Gospel
and the Criterion,
Splitter of the grain
and the date-stone,⁶⁴
I take refuge with You from the evil
of everything capable of evil,
and from the evil
of every crawling creature
that You are grasping
by its forelock.⁶⁵

Allāhumma
Rabba 's-samāwāti 's-sab'ī
wa Rabba 'L-'Arshi 'L-'Aẓīm:
Rabba-nā
wa Rabba kulli shai':
Munazzila 't-Tawrāti
wa 'l-Injīli wa 'l-Furqān:
Fāliqa 'l-ḥabbi
wa 'n-nawā
a'ūdhu bi-ka min sharri
kulli dhī sharr:
wa min sharri
kulli dābbatin
Anta ākhdhun
bi-nāṣiyati-hā.

⁶¹ See n. 11 on p. 9 above.

⁶² See n. 42 on p. 33 above.

⁶³ The Arabic verb *kabbara*, of which *takbīr* is the corresponding verbal noun, means “to proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh, by saying: ‘Allāh is Supremely Great [*Allāhu Akbar*].’”

⁶⁴ This is an allusion to Q. 6:96.

⁶⁵ This is an allusion to Q. 11:56.

O Allāh, You are the First,
for there is nothing before You,
and You are the Last,
for there is nothing after You,
and You are the Outer,
for there is nothing above You,
and You are the Inner,
for there is nothing below You.
Settle the debt for me,
and relieve me of poverty.

Allāhumma Anta 'l-Awwalu
fa-laisa qabla-ka shai':
wa Anta 'l-Ākhiru
fa-laisa ba'da-ka shai':
wa Anta 'z-Zāhiru
fa-laisa fawqa-ka shai':
wa Anta 'l-Bāṭinu
fa-laisa dūna-ka shai':
iqdi 'an-ni 'd-daina
wa aghni 'an-ni 'l-faqr.



**Concerning the need to make a constant practice
of *tahajjud*,⁶⁶ after one has received a blessing
through the observance of night vigil
[*qiyām al-lail*] and the performance
of certain supererogatory devotions
[*nawāfil*].**

When someone has received a blessing through the observance of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], and the performance of certain supererogatory devotions [*nawāfil*], it is incumbent upon him to make a constant practice of *tahajjud*, provided that he is capable of doing so, and that he has no valid excuse for not doing so.

This assertion is based on the fact that, according to a report from ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone embarks on an act of worshipful service [*‘ibāda*] for the sake of Allāh (Glory be to Him), but then abandons it on account of boredom, Allāh (Exalted is He) will despise him.

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) also said: “If sleep overwhelmed him, or if he was sick, Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would not keep vigil that night. He would perform twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer during the daytime [instead].”

As stated in the traditional report [*khābar*]: “Of all good works, that which is dearest to Allāh (Exalted is He) is that which is most diligently and persistently performed, even if it does not amount to very much.”



⁶⁶ See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

Concerning the recommended utterances to be made by someone who devotes part of the night to the practice of *tahajjud*.⁶⁷

When someone intends to devote part of the night to keeping vigil, in order to perform the prayers called *tahajjud*, it is considered commendable for him to say:

Praise be to Allāh,
who restored me to life
after causing me to die;
and unto Him is the Resurrection.

*al-ḥamdu li' llāhi 'lladhī
ahyā-nī
ba'da an amāta-nī
wa ilai-hi 'n-nushūr.*

He should also recite the ten Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*] from the last part of the Sūra entitled *Āl 'Imrān* [The Family of 'Imrān]:

[There are signs for] those
who remember Allāh,
standing and sitting
and on their sides, and who
reflect upon the creation
of the heavens and the earth:
“Our Lord, You have not created
this in vain. Glory be to You!
So guard us against
the torment of the Fire.”

*alladhīna
yadhkurūna 'llāha qiyāman
wa qu'ūdān
wa 'alā junūbi-him
wa yatafakkarūna
fī khalqī 's-samāwāti wa 'l-arḍ:
Rabba-nā mā khalaqta
hādha bātilā: subḥāna-ka
fa-qi-nā
'adhāba 'n-nār.*

Our Lord, whomever
You cause to enter the Fire,
him You will have abased,
and for the evildoers
there will be no helpers.

*Rabba-nā inna-ka
man tudkhili 'n-nāra
fa-qad akhẓaita-h:
wa mā li' ḡ-ẓālimīna
min anṣār.*

Our Lord,
we have heard a crier calling us
to faith, saying:
“Believe in your Lord!”
So we have believed.
Our Lord, forgive us
our sins and acquit us

*Rabba-nā
inna-nā sami'nā munādiyan
yunādī li'l-īmāni an
āminū bi-Rabbi-kum
fa-āmannā Rabba-nā
fa-'ghfir la-nā
dhumūba-nā wa kaffir*

⁶⁷ See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

of our evil deeds, and
let us die in the company
of the righteous.

Our Lord, give us that
which You have promised us
through Your Messengers,
and do not put us to shame
on the Day of Resurrection.
Surely You will not fail
to keep the trust!

And their Lord has answered them:
“I do not waste
the labor of any laborer among you,
whether male or female;
the one of you is from the other.
So those who emigrated,
and were driven
from their homes,
and suffered for My cause,
and fought and were slain,
I shall surely acquit
them of their evil deeds,
and I shall admit
them to Gardens
underneath which rivers flow—
a reward from Allāh,
and with Allāh
is the fairest reward.”

Let it not delude you,
that those who disbelieve
enjoy freedom of action in the land.

A little enjoyment,
but then their habitation
will be Hell, an evil cradle!

But those who keep
their duty to their Lord,
for them there will be Gardens
underneath which rivers flow,
dwelling therein forever,
a welcome from their Lord.
That which Allāh has in store
is better for the righteous.

And of the People of the Book
there are some who believe

‘an-nā sayyi’ āti-nā
wa tawaffa-nā
ma’a ‘l-abrār.

Rabba-nā wa āti-nā
mā wa’adta-nā
‘alā Rusuli-ka
wa lā tukhzi-nā
yawma ‘l-qiyāma:
inna-ka lā
tukhlifu ‘l-mī’ād.

fa-’stajāba la-hum Rabbu-hum
annī lā uđī’u
‘amala ‘āmilin
min-kum min dhakarīn aw unthā:
ba’du-kum min ba’đ:
fa-’lladhīna hājarū
wa ukhrijū
min diyāri-him
wa ūdhū fi sabīlī
wa qātalū wa qutilū
la-ukaffiranna
‘an-hum sayyi’ āti-him
wa la-udkhillanna-hum
jannātin
tajrī min
taḥti-ha ‘l-anhār: thawāban
min ‘indi ‘llāh: wa ‘llāhu
‘inda-hu ḥusnu ‘th-thawāb.

lā yaghurranna-ka
taqallubu ‘lladhīna
kafarū fi ‘l-bilād.
matā’ un qalīl:
thumma ma’ wā-hum
jahannam: wa bi’sa ‘l-mihād.

lākini ‘lladhīna ‘ttaqaw
Rabba-hum la-hum
jannātun
tajrī min taḥti-ha ‘l-anhāru
khālidīna fi-hā nuzulan
min ‘indi ‘llāh:
wa mā ‘inda ‘llāhi
khairun li’l-abrār.

wa inna min Ahli ‘l-Kitābi
la-man yu’minu

in Allāh and what has been sent
down to you,
and what has been sent down
to them, humble toward Allāh,
not selling Allāh's signs
for a small price.
Their reward is with their Lord.
Allāh is Swift at reckoning.

O you who believe, be patient,
and vie in patience; be steadfast,
and observe your duty to Allāh,
in order that you may succeed.
(3:191–200)

*bi'llāhi wa mā unzila
ilai-kum
wa mā unzila
ilai-him khāshī'ina li'llāhi
lā yashtarūna bi-āyāti'llāhi
thamanan qatīlā: ulā'ika
la-hum ajru-hum 'inda Rabbi-him
inna'llāha Saṭī'u'l-ḥisāb.*

*yā ayyuha'lladhīna āmanu 'shbirū
wa ṣābirū wa rābiṭū:
wa'ttaqu'llāha
la'alla-kum tufliḥūn.*

Next, he should proceed to clean his teeth with a toothbrush [*siwāk*],
and perform the minor ritual ablution [*wuḍū'*]. Then he should say:

Glory be to You,
and with Your praise!
There is no god but You.
I seek Your forgiveness
and I beg You to accept
my repentance,
so forgive me and relent toward me,
for You are the Ever-Relenting,
the All-Compassionate.

O Allāh, let me be
one of those who repent.
Let me be one of those
who purify themselves.
Let me be very patient
and very thankful,
Let me be one of those
who remember You
very, very often,
and who glorify You
both early and late.

*subhāna-ka
wa bi-ḥamdi-ka
lā ilāha illā Anta
astaghfiru-ka
wa as'alu-ka't-
tawba:
fa-'ghfir li wa tub'alayya
inna-ka Anta't-Tawwābu'r-
Raḥīm.*

*Allāhumma 'j'al-nī
mina't-tawwābīn:
wa 'j'al-nī
mina'l-mutaṭahhīrīn:
wa 'j'al-nī ṣabūran
shakūrā:
wa 'j'al-nī mim-man
yadhkur-ka dhikran
kathīrā:
wa yusabbih-ka
bukratan wa aṣīlā.*

Then he should raise his head heavenward and say:

I bear witness
that there is no god but Allāh,
Alone, without partner.
I also bear witness that
Muḥammad is His servant
and His Messenger.
I take refuge with Your pardon
from Your torment.

*ashhadu an
lā ilāha illa'llāhu Waḥda-h:
lā sharīka la-h:
wa ashhadu
anna Muḥammadan 'abdu-hu
wa Rasūlu-h.
a'ūdhu bi-'afwi-ka
min 'adhābi-ka*

I take refuge with Your good pleasure
from Your disapproval,
and I take refuge with You
from You!

I can never extol You enough, for
You are as You have extolled Yourself
I am Your servant,
and the son of Your servant.
My forelock is in Your hand.⁶⁸
Let Your judgment be in my favor!
Let Your verdict be fair to me!
These are my hands,
with what they have earned,
and this is my soul,
with what it has produced.

There is no god but You.
Glory be to You.
I have been one of the wrongdoers.
I have acted badly
and wronged myself,
so forgive me my enormous sin.
You are indeed my Lord.
Surely no one
forgives sins but You.

wa a'ūdhu bi-riḍā-ka
min sukhtī-ka
wa a'ūdhu bi-ka
min-ka

lā aḥṣī thanā' an 'alai-ka
Anta ka-mā athnaita 'alā Nafsi-k.
ana 'abdu-ka
wa 'bnu 'abdi-ka
nāṣiyatī bi-yadi-k.
jāri fiyya ḥukma-k:
'addil fiyya qaḍā'a-k.
hādhihi yadāya
bi-mā kasabat
wa hādhihi nafsī
bi-mā akhrajāt.

lā ilāha illā Anta
subḥāna-k:
innī kuntu mina 'z-zālimīn:
'amiltu sū' an
wa zalamtu nafsī
fa-'ghfir lī dhanbī 'l-'aẓīm:
inna-ka Anta Rabbī
inna-hu lā
yaghfiru 'dh-dhunūba illā Ant.

Then, when he stands ready to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], facing toward the *Qibla*, he should say:

Allāh is Supremely Great,
immensely so!
And praise be to Allāh,
abundantly!
And glory be to Allāh,
both early and late.

Allāhu Akbar
kabīrā:
wa 'l-ḥamdu li'llāhi
kathīrā:
wa subḥāna 'llāhi
bukratan wa aṣīlā:

He should also say:

Glory be to Allāh!

subḥāna 'llāh.

—ten times;

Praise be to Allāh!

al-ḥamdu li'llāh.

—ten times;

There is no god but Allāh!

lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

—ten times, and:

Allāh is Supremely Great!

Allāhu Akbar.

—ten times.

⁶⁸ See n. 65 on p. 58 above.

He should also say:

Allāh is Supremely Great! [He is]
the Owner of the Kingdom
and the Dominion,
of the Grandeur and the Might,
of the Majesty and the Power.

*Allāhu Akbaru
Dhu 'l-Malakūti
wa 'l-Jabarūti
wa 'l-Kibriyā' i wa 'l-ʿAzamati
wa 'l-Jalāli wa Qudra.*

If he wishes to utter the following words, he may do so in the knowledge that they have been transmitted [*ma' thūra*] from Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), who used to utter them in his observance of the *tahajjud*⁶⁹ prayers:

O Allāh, to You belongs the praise!
You are the Light of the heavens
and the earth,
and to You belongs the praise!
You are the Splendor of the heavens
and the earth,
and to You belongs the praise!
You are the Beauty of the heavens
and the earth,
and to You belongs the praise!
You are the Eternal Sustainer
of the heavens and the earth,
and of those therein
and those thereon.

*Allāhumma la-ka 'l-ḥamd:
Anta nūru 's-samāwāti
wa 'l-arḍi
wa la-ka 'l-ḥamd:
Anta Bahā' u 's-samāwāti
wa 'l-arḍi
wa la-ka 'l-ḥamd:
Anta Zainu 's-samāwāti
wa 'l-arḍi
wa la-ka 'l-ḥamd:
Anta Qayyūmu 's-samāwāti
wa 'l-arḍi
wa man fi-hinna
wa man ʿalai-hinn.*

You are the Truth,
and from You comes
what is real and true.
The Garden is real and true
and the Fire is real and true.
The Prophets are real and true,
and Muḥammad (Allāh bless him
and give him peace) is real and true.

*Anta 'l-Ḥaqqu
wa min-ka 'l-
ḥaqq:
wa 'l-jannatu ḥaqqun
wa 'n-nāru ḥaqqun
wa 'n-Nabiyyūna ḥaqqun
wa Muḥammadun
(ṣalla 'llāhu ʿalai-hi wa sallam) ḥaqq.*

O Allāh, to You I have surrendered,
in You I have believed,
and in You I have placed my trust.
With Your aid I have argued
my case
[against my unbelieving foes],
and to You I have
submitted the judgment.

*Allāhumma la-ka aslamtu
wa bi-ka āmantu
wa ʿalai-ka tawakkaltu
wa bi-ka
khāṣamtu*

So grant me forgiveness
for whatever [sins]
I have committed,

*wa ilai-ka
ḥākamt:
fa-'ghfir
lī mā qaddamtu
wa mā akhkhartu*

⁶⁹ See n. 52 on p. 45 above.

in earlier and later times,
in secret and in public.
You are the Accelerator,
and You are the Postponer.
There is no god but You.

O Allāh,
grant my soul its true devotion,
and cause it to grow in purity.
You are the One best qualified
to purify it.
You are its Custodian
and its Master.

O Allāh, guide me
toward the best of deeds,
for none guides to the best
of them but You,
and avert from me
the worst of them,
for none averts the worst
of them but You.

My request to You
is that of a wretched beggar,
and my plea to You
is that of a miserable pauper,
so do not treat me as a rogue,
my Lord, for supplicating You.
Be Kind to me, and Compassionate,
O Best of those who are asked,
and Most Generous of those who give!

*wa mā asrartu
wa mā a'lant.
Anta 'l-Muqaddimu
wa Anta 'l-Mu'akhhkir:
lā ilāha illā Anta.*

*Allāhumma
āti nafsī taqwā-hā
wa zakki-hā
Anta Khairu
man zakkā-hā
Anta Waliyyu-hā
wa Mawlā-hā.*

*Allāhumma 'hdi-nī
li-aḥsani 'l-a' māli
fa-inna-hu lā yahdī
li-aḥsani-hā illā Anta
wa 'ṣrif
'an-nī sayyi' a-hā
fa-inna-hu lā yaṣrifu
sayyi' a-hā illā Ant.*

*as'alu-ka mas'alata 'l-
bā'isi 'l-miskīni
wa ad'ū-ka du'ā' a 'l-
muftaqiri 'dh-dhalīl:
fa-lā taj'al-nī
bi-du'ā'i-ka Rabbi shaqiyyan
wa kun bī Ra'ūfan Raḥīman
yā Khaira 'l-mas'ūlīna
wa Akrama 'l-mu'īn.*

As we learn from a traditional report, conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',⁷⁰ it was Abū Salama ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān who said:

“I once asked 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her): ‘What expressions did the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) usually utter, when proclaiming the Supreme Greatness of Allāh and commencing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], while he was keeping vigil through part of the night?’ She answered by telling me: ‘He used to proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh and commence [his ritual prayer] by saying:

“O Allāh, Lord of Gabriel
and Michael and Isrāfīl,
Creator of the heavens
and the earth,

*Allāhumma Rabba Jibrīla
wa Mikā'ila wa Isrāfīl:
Fāṭira 's-samāwāti
wa 'l-arḍ:*

⁷⁰ *Author's note:* Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from Yahyā ibn Abi Kathīr—Abū Salama ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān—'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Knower of the unseen
and the visible,
You will judge
between Your servants
concerning that over which
they used to be at odds.⁷¹
Guide me to that
over which they were at odds—
to the Truth, by Your leave.
You surely guide whomever You will
to a path that is straight.””

‘Ālima ’l-ghaibi
wa ’sh-shahāda:
Anta taḥkumu
baina ‘ibādi-ka
fī-mā
kānū yakhtalifūn:
ihdī-nī
li-ma ’khtalafū fī-hi
mina ’l-ḥaqqi bi-idhni-k:
inna-ka tahdī man tashā’u
ilā ṣirāṭin mustaqīm.



⁷¹ This is an obvious allusion to Q. 22:69.

Concerning the recommended approach to the observance of nighttime prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*].

When the worshipper gets up to perform the nighttime prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*], he should follow these recommendations:

He should open his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] with two simple, unprotracted cycles [*rak'atain khafifatain*].

He should not take anything in the way of food and drink, until he has concluded whatever Allāh graciously bestows upon him in the way of performing the ritual prayer [*fi'l aṣ-ṣalāt*] and the proclamation of His glory [*tasbīḥ*]. This is because, when he wakes up from his sleep, he is undisturbed in his feelings and free from distracting concerns. As soon as he eats or drinks, however, the clear state of his heart will alter and turn murky. His best course, therefore, is to postpone the consumption of food and drink until later, unless he is very hungry indeed, to the point where hunger would make him inattentive, or if he is afraid of excessive daytime hunger in the month of Ramaḍān, and therefore dreads the break of dawn. In cases like these, the recommended course is to take one's meal at an earlier stage.



Concerning the recommended number of Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*] to be recited before the nighttime worshipper goes to sleep.

In order to be admitted into the company of the worshipful servants [*zumrat al-'ābidīn*], and not to be registered as one of those who are negligent and heedless [*ghāfilīn*], the keeper of vigil must conform to the recommended practice, which means that he must not go off to sleep until he has recited three hundred Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*]. He is therefore well advised to recite the Sūra of the Criterion [*Sūrat al-Furqān*]⁷² and the Sūra of the Poets [*Sūrat ash-Shu'arā'*],⁷³ since the two of them together contain a total of three hundred verses [*āyāt*].

If he does not know these two Sūras well enough, he may recite from the the Sūra of the Morning Star [*Sūrat at-Ṭāriq*]⁷⁴ right through to the very end of the Qur'ān, since that whole section also includes three hundred verses [*āyāt*].

It will be even better for him, and more complete in respect of merit, if he recites one thousand verses [*alf āya*], that is to say, from the Sūra⁷⁵ that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand
is the Sovereignty.

*tabāraka 'lladhī
bi-yadi-hi 'l-mulk.*

—through to the very end of the Qur'ān.

If he does not know the Qur'ān well enough [to be able to adopt any of these suggestions], he may recite [the short Sūra that begins with His words (Exalted is He)]:⁷⁶

Say: "He is Allāh, One!"

Qul Huwa 'llāh Aḥad.

⁷² The Sūra of the Criterion [*Sūrat al-Furqān*] is the 25th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁷³ The Sūra of the Poets [*Sūrat ash-Shu'arā'*] is the 26th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁷⁴ The Sūra of the Morning Star [*Sūrat at-Ṭāriq*] is the 86th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁷⁵ Often referred to as the Sūra of Sovereignty [*Sūrat al-Mulk*], this is the 67th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁷⁶ See note 28 on p. 27 above.

—two hundred and fifty times, for that will add up to a grand total of one thousand verses [*alf āya*].

It is important for him not to omit the recitation, throughout the entire course of the night, of four particular Sūras, namely: (1) the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Alif, Lām, Mīm. The revelation of the Book, of which there is no doubt, is from the Lord of All the Worlds.	<i>Alif-Lām-Mīm.</i> <i>tanzīlu 'l-Kitābi</i> <i>lā raiba fī-hi</i> <i>min Rabbi 'l-ālamīn.</i>
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—that is to say, the Sūra of Prostration [*Sūrat as-Sajda*],⁷⁷ (2) the Sūra entitled *Yā-Sīn*,⁷⁸ (3) the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He):

Ḥā-Mīm. By the Book that makes plain; We sent it down on a blessed night.... (44:1-3)	<i>Ḥā-Mīm:</i> <i>wa 'l-Kitābi 'l-mubīni</i> <i>innā anzalnā-hu</i> <i>fī lailatin mubārakatīn.</i>
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—that is to say, the Sūra of Smoke [*Sūrat ad-Dukhān*],⁷⁹ and (4) the Sūra that begins with His words (Exalted is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand is the Sovereignty.	<i>tabāraka 'lladhī</i> <i>bi-yadī-hi 'l-mulk.</i>
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—that is to say, the Sūra of Sovereignty [*Sūrat al-Mulk*].⁸⁰

He will do better still if he also recites, together with these four, the Sūra of the Enshrouded One [*Sūrat al-Muzzammil*]⁸¹ and the Sūra of the Event [*Sūrat al-Wāqī'a*].⁸²

It is said that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never go off to sleep until he had recited the Sūra of Prostration [*Sūrat as-Sajda*]⁸³ and the Sūra that begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Blessed is He in whose Hand is the Sovereignty.	<i>tabāraka 'lladhī</i> <i>bi-yadī-hi 'l-mulk.</i>
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⁷⁷ The Sūra of Prostration [*Sūrat as-Sajda*] is the 32nd Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁷⁸ The Sūra entitled *Yā-Sīn* is the 36th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁷⁹ The Sūra of Smoke [*Sūrat ad-Dukhān*] is the 44th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁸⁰ See n. 75 on p. 69 above.

⁸¹ The Sūra of the Enshrouded One [*Sūrat al-Muzzammil*] is the 73rd Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁸² The Sūra of the Event [*Sūrat al-Wāqī'a*] is the 56th Sūra of the Qur'ān.

⁸³ See n. 77 above.

—that is to say, the Sūra of Sovereignty [*Sūrat al-Mulk*].⁸⁴

According to another traditional report [*khabar*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never go off to sleep until he had recited the Sūra of the Children of Israel [*Sūra Banī Isrāʾīl*]⁸⁵ and the Sūra of the Troops [*Sūrat az-Zumar*].⁸⁶

According to yet another traditional report [*khabar*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never go off to sleep until he had recited the Sūras of Glorification [*al-Musabbiḥāt*].⁸⁷ These are said to include one particular verse [*āya*] that is more excellent than a hundred thousand verses.

It is because they share one very significant feature, that the Sūras of Glorification [*al-Musabbiḥāt*] have been given this collective title. Each of them begins with a verse [*āya*] in which the first Arabic word is *subhāna* [glory], or *sabbaha* [has glorified], or *yusabbiḥu* [glorifies], or *sabbiḥ* [glorify]. As for the separate titles of the Sūras concerned, and their opening verses [*āyāt*], they are as follows:

• The Sūra of the Children of Israel [*Sūra Banī Isrāʾīl*], also known as the Sūra of the Night Journey [*Sūrat al-Isrāʾ*], which begins with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Glory be to the One who carried His servant by night from the Sacred Place of Worship to the Far Distant Place of Worship, the precincts of which We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs! Surely He, only He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (17:1)	<i>subhāna ʾlladhī asrā</i> <i>bi-ʿabdi-hi lailan</i> <i>mina ʾl-Masjidi ʾl-Ḥarāmī</i> <i>ila ʾl-Masjidi ʾl-</i> <i>Aqṣa ʾlladhī</i> <i>bāraknā</i> <i>ḥawla-hu</i> <i>li-nuriya-hu</i> <i>min āyāti-nā:</i> <i>inna-hu</i> <i>Huwa ʾs-Samīʿu ʾl-</i> <i>Baṣīr.</i>
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• The Sūra of Iron [*Sūrat al-Ḥadīd*], which begins with the words of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He):

All that is in the heavens and the earth has glorified Allāh,	<i>sabbaha liʾllāhi</i> <i>mā fi ʾs-samāwāti wa ʾl-arḍ:</i>
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⁸⁴ See n. 75 on p. 69 above.

⁸⁵ The Sūra of the Children of Israel [*Sūra Banī Isrāʾīl*] is the 17th Sūra of the Qurʾān. It is also known as the Sūra of the Night Journey [*Sūrat al-Isrāʾ*].

⁸⁶ The Sūra of the Troops [*Sūrat az-Zumar*] is the 39th Sūra of the Qurʾān.

⁸⁷ The Sūras of Glorification [*al-Musabbiḥāt*] are the 17th, 57th, 59th, 61st, 62nd, 64th and 87th Sūras of the Qurʾān.

and He is the Omnipotent,
the All-Wise. (57:1)

*wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-
Ḥakīm.*

- The Sūra of Exile [*Sūrat al-Ḥashr*], which begins with the words of Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He):

All that is in the heavens
has glorified Allāh,
and all that is in the earth,
and He is the Omnipotent,
the All-Wise. (59:1)

*sabbaḥa li'llāhi
mā fi 's-samāwāti
wa mā fi 'l-ard:
wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-
Ḥakīm.*

- The Sūra of the Ranks [*Sūrat aṣ-Ṣaff*], which begins with the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

All that is in the heavens
has glorified Allāh,
and all that is in the earth,
and He is the Omnipotent,
the All-Wise. (61:1)

*sabbaḥa li'llāhi
mā fi 's-samāwāti
wa mā fi 'l-ard:
wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-
Ḥakīm.*

- The Sūra of the Congregation [*Sūrat al-Jumu'a*], which begins with His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

All that is in the heavens
glorifies Allāh,
and all that is in the earth,
[for He is] the King,
the All-Holy, the Omnipotent,
the All-Wise. (62:1)

*yusabbiḥu li'llāhi
mā fi 's-samāwāti
wa mā fi 'l-ardī 'l-
Maliki 'l-
Quddūsi 'l-'Azīzi 'l-
Ḥakīm:*

- The Sūra of Mutual Disillusion [*Sūrat at-Taghābun*], which begins with the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

All that is in the heavens
has glorified Allāh,
and all that is in the earth.
To Him belongs the sovereignty
and to Him belongs the praise,
and He is Capable of all things.
(64:1)

*sabbaḥa li'llāhi
mā fi 's-samāwāti
wa mā fi 'l-ard:
la-hu 'l-mulku
wa la-hu 'l-ḥamd:
wa Huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadr.*

- The Sūra of the Most High [*Sūrat al-A'lā*], which begins with the words of Allāh (Glory be to Him and Exalted is He):

Glorify the Name
of your Lord the Most High,
who created, and then shaped,
and who determined, then guided.
(87:1-3)

*sabbiḥi 'sma
Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā:
alladhī khalaqa fa-sawwā:
wa 'lladhī qaddara fa-hadā.*

As for the verse [*āya*] that is said to be “more excellent than a hundred thousand verses,” most of the scholars maintain that its specific identity is concealed from our knowledge, like the exact date of the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*],⁸⁸ or the precise time of the Special Hour on Friday, the Day of Congregation [*Sā‘at al-Jum‘a*].⁸⁹ According to ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq, however, it is most probably either the final verse [*āya*] of the Sūra of Exile [*Sūrat al-Ḥaṣhr*], in which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has said:

He is Allāh, the Creator,
the Maker, the Shaper.
His are the Most Beautiful Names.
All that is in the heavens
glorifies Him
and all that is in the earth,
and He is the Omnipotent,
the All-Wise. (59:24)

*Huwa 'llāhu 'l-Khāliq 'l-
Bāri' u 'l-Muṣawwiru
la-hu 'l-asmā' u 'l-ḥusnā.
yusabbiḥu la-hu
mā fi 's-samāwāti
wa mā fi 'l-arḍ:
wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-
Ḥakīm.*

—or the first verse [*āya*] of the Sūra of Iron [*Sūrat al-Ḥadīd*], in which Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

All that is in the heavens
and the earth has glorified Allāh,
and He is the Omnipotent,
the All-Wise. (57:1)

*sabbaḥa li'llāhi
mā fi 's-samāwāti wa 'l-arḍ:
wa Huwa 'l-'Azīzu 'l-
Ḥakīm.*



⁸⁸ As Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained, in the Sixth Discourse of the present work:

Concerning the wisdom in the decision of Allāh (Exalted is He) to make known [the date of] the Night of Absolution, while concealing [that of] the Night of Power, it has been said to lie in the fact that the Night of Power is the night of mercy and forgiveness and emancipation from the fires of Hell, which Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has kept hidden so that there can be no discussion about it. He has made known the Night of Absolution, however, because it is the night of regulation and decree, the night of displeasure and approval, the night of acceptance and rejection, of attainment and obstruction, the night of bliss and woe, of grace and cleansing. (See Vol. 3, p. 67.)

⁸⁹ See p. 18 above, and especially Vol. 3, pp. 295–325.

Concerning various things from which help should be sought, in preparation for the observance of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*].

In order to prepare himself for the observance of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], the worshipper should turn to several things for assistance, including the following:

- Keeping to a lawful diet [*akl al-ḥalāl*].
- Charting a straight course toward repentance [*tawba*], by using fear of the threatened penalty [*waʿīd*] as the negative pole of the compass, and hope of the promised reward [*mawʿūd*] as the positive pole thereof.
- Taking care to avoid the consumption of things that are of dubious legality [*shubuhāt*], and steering clear of persistence in the commission of sins.
- Ridding the heart of the dominant influence of worldly concern and attachment, by remembering death, and by reflecting on the Resurrection [*Maʿād*] and what one will encounter after death.

A man once said to al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): “O Abū Saʿīd, I have rejected my own excuses. I love the idea of keeping night vigil, and I prepare my state of ritual purity [in order to be ready for it], so what can be wrong with me? Why do I not get up to observe the vigil in practice?” To this al-Ḥasan replied: “Your sins have tied you down.”

It was ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: “I was banned from keeping night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] for five long months, and all because of a sin I had committed.” When someone asked him what that sin had been, he explained: “I saw a man shedding tears, so I said to myself: ‘This fellow is nothing but an ostentatious hypocrite [*murāʿin!*]’”

Al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) used to say: “It may happen that the servant [of the Lord] commits a sin, and

then finds himself banned, because of it, from both nighttime vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] and daytime fasting [*ṣiyām an-nahār*].”

As someone has wisely expressed it: “Many a meal has prevented the keeping of night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*], just as many a glance has banned the recitation of a Qur’ānic Sūra. The servant [of the Lord] may gobble the meal, or commit some act [of impropriety], only to find himself banned, because of it, from observing the customary⁹⁰ practice [*qiyām as-sunna*]. Through the art of careful scrutiny [*tafaqqud*], he will come to recognize the difference between excess and deficiency, and by committing fewer sins he will master the art of careful scrutiny.”

Abū Sulaimān (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) once said: “No one ever misses a congregational prayer [*ṣalāt jamā‘a*], except on account of a sin.” He also used to say: “The nocturnal emission of sperm [*iḥtilām*] is a punishment, and the [resulting] state of major ritual impurity [*janāba*] is a state of remoteness [from the Lord].”

Other practices that are helpful, in preparation for the observance of night vigil, include reducing one’s intake of food and drink to the bare minimum, and keeping the stomach as empty as possible. This advice is supported by the following traditional report, related by ‘Awn ibn ‘Abdi’llāh (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him):

“Among the Children of Israel [*Banī Isrā’īl*] there were people who devoted themselves to worshipful service, so, when their time of breaking fast [*fiṭr*] was at hand, a superintendent would address them, saying: ‘Do not eat too much, for, if you eat a lot, you will also sleep a lot. Then, if you sleep a lot, you will do very little praying.’”

The tendency to sleep a lot, it has been said, can also result from the frequent drinking of water. As a matter of fact, this is said to represent the unanimous view of seventy champions of the truth [*sab‘īn ṣiddīqan*], all of whom maintain that much sleeping results from much drinking of water.

In his preparation for keeping night vigil, the worshipper will also find it helpful to accustom his heart to anxiety, to grief and to sorrow, as well as to constant alertness, for he will thereby enliven his heart. He should also maintain a constant contemplation of the Heavenly Kingdom [*al-Malakūt*]. He should take a nap or siesta during the daytime, and avoid overtiring his physical limbs and organs in dealing with the affairs of this world.

⁹⁰ By “customary” we mean following the exemplary custom [*sunna* in Arabic] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

If he so chooses, he may spend the first part of the night awake, until sleep overwhelms him. Then he may sleep, and then renew his vigil when he wakes up. Then he may sleep again, when sleep overwhelms him, and then arise to spend the last part of the night in vigil. In the course of the night, he will thus experience two awakenings [*qawmatān*] and two bouts of sleeping [*nawmatān*]. He will thereby brave the stresses and strains of the night, which is the hardest of deeds to accomplish.

Such is the spiritual state of the people of present awareness [*hudūr*], conscious alertness [*yaqza*], reflection [*fikr*] and contemplation [*tadhakkur*]. Such, it has also been said, are some of the characteristics of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). The ordinary nighttime worshipper is likely to experience very irregular bouts of waking and sleeping. As for the ability to strike a perfectly even balance between vigil and slumber, that is peculiar to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), because his heart is in a permanent state of alertness. The inspiration [*wahy*] received from Allāh (Glory be to Him), telling precisely what to do and what not to do, and exactly when to wake up and when to sleep, and indicating the need for change and movement—that is peculiar to him, and quite beyond the scope of ordinary creatures.



Concerning two reasons why the keeper of night vigil is recommended to catch some sleep during the last part of the night.

The keeper of night vigil [*man qāma 'l-lail*] is recommended to catch some sleep during the last part of the night, for these two reasons:

1. Drowsiness [*nu'ās*] will thereby leave him unaffected in the early morning [*ghadāh*]. It is considered reprehensible to sleep in the early morning, which explains why they used to instruct a drowsy person [*nā'is*] to sleep after the [prescribed] prayer of dawn [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ*], and to refrain from sleeping before the same. As we learn from traditional sources, Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would usually take a nap after the [prescribed] prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt al-fajr*].

2. Sleep during the last part of the night is effective in ridding the face of a pallid complexion [*ṣufra*]. If a person forces himself to go without the sleep he needs, and does not even take a nap, his complexion will retain its state of pallor. That is something against which he ought to be on guard, because it is a doorway that leads into a blind alley [*bāb ghāmiḍ*]. It is conducive to hidden ambition [*shahwa khafiyya*] and concealed polytheism [*shirk khafī*], because people will point him out as someone special. He will acquire an imaginary reputation as a model of righteousness [*ṣalāh*], as one who is devoted to vigilant wakefulness and fasting, and who is motivated by the fear of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He)—and all on account of that pallid complexion he wears on his face. We take refuge with Allāh from attributing partners to Him [*shirk*], and from hypocritical display [*riyā'*], as well as from every signpost that points in the direction thereof!

It is also important for the keeper of vigil to drink only a minimal amount of water in the course of the night. This is because the drinking of water tends to bring on sleep, as we have explained above,⁹¹ and

⁹¹ See p. 75 above.

because it contributes to the pallid complexion of the face, especially in the last part of the night, but also at the time of waking up from sleep.

As we are told in the words of the traditional report [*khbar*]: “When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had performed the *witr* prayer at the end of the night, he used to lie down and take a nap, reclining on his right side, until Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) came to give him the call, at which point he would go out with him to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”

Our righteous predecessors [*as-salaf*] were very much in favor of this practice of reclining and taking a nap, after the *witr* and before the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ*]. Some of them even went so far as to make it an established customary practice [*sunna*], notably Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) and those who followed his example in this respect.

When they recommended this practice so highly, they did so for very good reasons. It is of the utmost value to the people of direct vision [*mushāhada*] and present awareness [*ḥuḍūr*], because they receive insights into the Heavenly Kingdom [*al-Malakūt*], they are enlightened by all kinds of knowledge from the Heavenly Dominion [*al-Jabarūt*], they grasp the mysterious subtleties of the law and the sciences [*gharāʾib al-ḥukm wa ʿl-ʿulūm*], and they come to recognize what had been concealed from them, in the way of destiny’s allotted shares and portions, meaning what has been prepared for them by the Lord of the realm of creation [*Rabb al-khalīqa*], the Knower of the invisible realms [*ʿAllām al-Ghuyūb*]. It is also of value to the dutiful workers [*ʿummāl*] and those engaged in the sacred struggle [*ahl al-mujāhada*], since in their case it represents a much-needed opportunity for rest and relaxation.

This explains why Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) forbade the performance of ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] in the interval between the rising of the dawn [*ṭulūʿ al-fajr*] and the rising of the sun [*ṭulūʿ ash-shams*], and in the interval between the afternoon [*ʿaṣr*] and the setting of the sun [*ghurūb ash-shams*], thereby allowing periods of rest for those who observe the nocturnal and diurnal litanies [*ahl awrād al-lail wa ʿn-nahār*].

It is likewise recommended, for the keeper of vigil, that he should punctuate the phases of the nighttime prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*] with a period

of sitting still, in which he recites one hundred glorifications [*yusabbih mi'a tasbiha*]. This will be helpful to him in the performance of the prayer itself, for it will allow his physical limbs and organs to take a rest. The lower self [*nafs*] may cease to regard the vigil with an attitude of weary boredom, and may even acquire a positive liking for nighttime worship [*tahajjud*] and the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. Be that as it may, this recommendation is clearly in accordance with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And in the night
proclaim His praise,
and at the setting of the stars.
(52:49)

wa mina 'l-laili
fa-sabbih-hu
wa idbāra 'n-nujūm.

—and with His words (Exalted is He):

And in the night
proclaim His praise,
and at the ends of the prostrations.
(50:40)

wa mina 'l-laili
fa-sabbih-hu
wa adbāra 's-sujūd.



Concerning how to make up for having missed the night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] on account of sleep or preoccupation [with worldly matters].

If someone misses the night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*] on account of sleep or preoccupation [with worldly matters], and if he then makes up for it [with devotions performed] between the rising of the sun and the sun's decline from the meridian, he is just like a worshipper who has performed the prayer at its proper time in the night.

This assertion is based on a traditional report, conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',⁹² to the effect that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

Four cycles of ritual prayer [*raka'āt*], performed before the point of noon [*qabl az-zuhr*]—which is just after the sun's decline from the meridian [*ba'd az-zawāl*]—will be reckoned as equal to their counterparts in the period before daybreak [*as-sahar*].

Likewise reported on the authority of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is a statement of similar import, though differently worded, in which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

If someone fails to recite his section of the Qur'ān [*ḥizb*] in the course of the night, due to oversleeping or simply forgetting about it, and if he then recites it in the period between the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] and the noon prayer [*ṣalāt az-zuhr*], it will be just as if he had recited it during the night.

One of our righteous forebears [*as-salaf*] is reported as having said: "On this point, the members of the family of Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) are unanimously agreed. They all maintain that, if someone performs his litany [*wird*]—after missing it during the

⁹² **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdī'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—'Abdu'llāh ibn Ghanam—'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

night—before the sun’s decline from the meridian, he is just like someone who actually performed it during the night.”

If he is unable to do this, he should make up for it between the noon [*ẓuhr*] and the afternoon [*‘aṣr*].

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

And He it is who has made
the night and day a succession,
for him who desires to remember,
or desires thankfulness. (25:62)

wa Huwa 'llādhī ja'ala 'l-
laila wa 'n-nahāra khilfatan
li-man arāda an yadhakkara
aw arāda shukūrā.

—in other words, He has caused them to be a pair of alternating successors [*khalafain*], which follow one after the other in priority, replacing each other by turns.



Concerning the five litanies of the nighttime [*awrād al-lail*], and their respective times.

From all that has been mentioned and discussed above, we may reach the conclusion that the litanies of the nighttime [*awrād al-lail*] are five in number, namely:

1. The litany [*wird*] that is recited between sunset and nightfall [*baina 'l-'ishā' ain*].⁹³
2. That which is recited after the late evening prayer [*al-'ishā' al-ākhirā*], and before the time when the worshipper goes off to sleep.
3. That which is recited in the middle of the night [*jawf al-lail*].
4. That which is recited in the final third of the night.
5. That which is recited in the last interval [*sahar*] before the appearance of the second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*].⁹⁴ This is the period of time during which it is forbidden to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*],⁹⁵ and this is why the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The [voluntary] nighttime ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-lail*] is properly performed in sets of two cycles [*mathnā mathnā*], but if you are afraid [that you may not finish before the appearance] of the dawn [*fajr*], you must perform one separate cycle of prayer [*awtir bi-rak'ā*], and what has preceded it will then be counted as part of your *witr* prayer.

O Allāh, [let him not resort to this] unless he happens to have missed his *witr* prayer and his litany [*wird*] through oversleeping, for he ought to perform his ritual prayer at this [the appropriate] hour, in accordance with the explanation given above, in the subsection concerning the performance of the *witr*.⁹⁶

⁹³ Literally, “between the two evening times.”

⁹⁴ The second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*] is also known as the true dawn [*al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq*].

⁹⁵ See p. 109 below.

⁹⁶ See pp. 42–44 above.

Subsections [*fuṣūl*] concerning the litanies of the daytime [*awrād an-nahār*].

Concerning the five litanies of the daytime [*awrād an-nahār*], and their respective times.

As for the litanies of the daytime [*awrād an-nahār*], these are also five in number, namely:

1. The litany [*wird*] recited in the period between the appearance of the second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*]⁹⁷ and the rising of the sun.
2. That which is recited between the forenoon ritual prayer [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] (or the corresponding time, if that prayer is not performed)⁹⁸ and the moment of the sun's decline from the meridian [*zawāl*].
3. That which is recited in conjunction with four cycles [*raka'āt*] [of voluntary ritual prayer], after the sun's decline from the meridian [*zawāl*], with a beautiful Qur'ānic recitation and a single salutation [*salām*]. It has been said that the gates of heaven are opened up to receive it.
4. That which is recited between the time of the noon prayer and the time of the afternoon prayer [*baina 'z-zuhr wa 'l-'aṣr*].
5. That which is recited after the time of the afternoon prayer, and before the sunset [*ba'da 'l-'aṣr wa qabla 'l-ghurūb*].

⁹⁷ The second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*] is also known as the true dawn [*al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq*]. (See p. 118 below.)

⁹⁸ The forenoon prayer [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] is not one of the five obligatory daily prayers. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once described it as “the prayer of those who frequently repent [*ṣalāt al-awwābīn*].” According to one authority cited by E.W. Lane in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. '–W–B, the time for its [optional] performance is “when the young camels feel the heat of the sun from the parched ground.” According to Thomas Patrick Hughes (*Dictionary of Islam*, art. ṢALĀT), the forenoon prayer [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] consists of eight cycles [*raka'āt*], and the time for its optional performance is around 11 a.m.

Concerning the first litany [*wird*] of the daytime.

As for the first litany [*wird*] of the daytime, the recommended procedure is as follows: The worshipper should remain in a sitting posture, from just after the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] until the rising of the sun. He should devote that period to the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He), either by reciting the Qurʾān, or through some other suitable practice, such as glorification [*tasbīh*],⁹⁹ or reflection [*tafakkur*], or contemplation [*tadhakkur*], or providing religious instruction [*taʿlīm*], or sitting as a student in the company of a religious scholar [*ʿālim*]. The same applies to the period between the end of the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*] and the setting of the sun, because both are periods of time in which it is forbidden to perform supererogatory ritual prayers [*tanafful bi' ṣ-ṣalāt*].

This is based on a traditional report, conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',¹⁰⁰ to the effect that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

To sit with a group of people, from just after the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] until the rising of the sun, remembering Allāh (Exalted is He), proclaiming His Supreme Greatness [*ukabbiru*]¹⁰¹ and affirming His Uniqueness [*uhallilu*]¹⁰² — that is even dearer to me than securing the emancipation of a pair of slaves. As for remembering Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) from just after the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*] until the sun sets, that is even dearer to me than securing the emancipation of four slaves, from among the offspring of Ishmael [*Ismāʿil*].

⁹⁹ See n. 11 on p. 9 above.

¹⁰⁰ **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdī'llāh ibn al-Bannā'—Abū ʿAlī Ismāʿil ibn Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿil al-Khaṭṭī—Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb—Hudaiba ibn Khālid al-Qaisī—Aḥmad ibn Salama—ʿAlī ibn Zaid—ash-Shaʿbī—Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹⁰¹ See n. 63 on p. 58 above.

¹⁰² See n. 10 on p. 9 above.

According to another traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

You must not sleep at the expense of seeking your provisions [*arḏāq*]!

“O Anas,” someone asked, “what did Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) mean, when he said: ‘You must not sleep at the expense of seeking your provisions [*arḏāq*]?’” So Anas explained: “As soon as you have performed the dawn prayer [*ṣallaitum al-fajr*], [instead of going off to sleep] you should say, thirty-three times:

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|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Praise be to Allāh! | <i>al-ḥamdu li’ llāh.</i> |
| • Glory be to Allāh! | <i>subḥāna ’ llāh.</i> |
| • There is no god but Allāh! | <i>lā ilāha illa ’ llāh.</i> |
| • Allāh is Supremely Great! ” | <i>Allāhu Akbar.</i> |

According to another traditional report [*ḥadīth*], the worshipper should say:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| • Glory be to Allāh! | <i>subḥāna ’ llāh.</i> |
|----------------------|------------------------|

—thirty-three times,

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| • Praise be to Allāh! | <i>al-ḥamdu li’ llāh.</i> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|

—thirty-three times, and:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| • Allāh is Supremely Great! | <i>Allāhu Akbar.</i> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|

—thirty-four times.

Then, to set the seal on his devotions, he should conclude by saying:

There is no god but Allāh, Alone, without partner. To Him belongs the sovereignty and to Him belongs the praise. He brings to life and causes death, while He is Ever-Living and never dies. All goodness is in His Hand, and He is Capable of all things.	<i>lā ilāha illa ’ llāhu Waḥda-hu lā sharīka la-h: la-hu ’ l-mulku wa la-hu ’ l-ḥamd: yuḥyī wa yumītu wa Huwa Ḥayyūn lā yamūt: bi-yadhi ’ l-khairu wa Huwa ’ alā kulli shai’ in Qadr.</i>
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The same procedure should be followed in the wake of the afternoon prayer [*ba’da ’ l-’ aṣr*], and again when the time for sleep is at hand.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr has also informed us¹⁰³ that az-Zubair (may Allāh be

¹⁰³ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Banna’ narrates this report on the authority of his own father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from ‘Urwa ibn az-Zubair—his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

well pleased with him) once heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

An errand in the early morning or the evening [*ghadwa aw rawha*], in fighting for Allāh’s cause [*fi sabili ’llāh*], is better than this world and all that it contains.

A man then said: “O Messenger of Allāh, so what about someone who is unable to take part in a military campaign [*ghazw*]?” To this he replied:

If a worshipper remains in a sitting posture, from the time when he performs the prayer of sunset [*yuṣalli ’l-maghrib*], remembering Allāh (Exalted is He) until he performs the prayer of late evening [*yuṣalli ’l-’ishā’*], that session [*majlis*] of his will count as an evening errand in the cause of Allāh [*rawha fi sabili ’llāh*]. As for one who remains in a sitting posture, from the time when he performs the prayer of daybreak [*yuṣalli ’l-ghadāh*], remembering Allāh (Exalted is He) until the sun rises, that session [*majlis*] of his will be just like an early morning errand in the cause of Allāh [*ghadwa fi sabili ’llāh*].

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’,¹⁰⁴ Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If any servant [of the Lord] recites, in the wake of the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt al-ghadāh*]:

There is no god but Allāh,
Alone, without partner.

To Him belongs the sovereignty
and to Him belongs the praise.

He brings to life and causes death,
while He is Ever-Living
and never dies.

All goodness is in His Hand,
and He is Capable of all things.

lā ilāha illa ’llāhu
Waḥda-hu lā sharika la-h:

la-hu ’l-mulku
wa la-hu ’l-ḥamd:

yuhyī wa yumītu
wa Huwa Ḥayyūn
lā yamūt:

bi-yadlhi ’l-khairu
wa Huwa ’alā kulli shai’ in Qadīr.

—ten times, Allāh will certainly reward him for those ten recitations. He will do so by recording ten good deeds in his credit column, and by erasing ten bad deeds from his debit column. He will also promote him by ten spiritual degrees. Those ten recitations will be equivalent to [the emancipation of] ten slaves, and he will not be harmed by any sin he may commit that day, unless it be some form of *shirk* [associating partners with Allāh].

If any servant [of the Lord] performs the ritual ablution [*wuḍū’*] really well, so that he washes his face as Allāh (Exalted is He) has commanded, Allāh will certainly relieve him of the burden of every sin at which his eyes have ever looked, or of which his tongue has ever spoken. If any servant [of the Lord] is careful to wash his hands, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has commanded, Allāh will certainly relieve him of the burden of every sin that his hands have ever touched.

¹⁰⁴ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ narrates this report on the authority of his own father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from **Abū Umāma** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Then, if he wipes his head and his ears, as Allāh (Exalted is He) has commanded, Allāh will certainly relieve him of the burden of every sin to which his ears have ever listened.

Then, if he washes his feet as Allāh (Exalted is He) has commanded, Allāh will certainly relieve him of the burden of every sin to which his feet have walked, until he stands ready to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. That ritual prayer will therefore be an excellent one.

If any servant [of the Lord] falls asleep in a state of ritual purity, while practicing remembrance [*dhikr*], then offers a prayer of supplication [*daʿwa*] as soon as he recovers consciousness, his supplication is sure to receive a positive response. If any servant [of the Lord] throws a spear, in fighting for the cause of Allāh [*fi sabilī ʾllāh*] (Almighty and Glorious is He), regardless of whether he hits his target or misses his mark, he will surely be rewarded for his effort, as he would for the freeing of a slave.

If any servant [of the Lord] grows one gray hair, while fighting for Allāh's cause [*fi sabilī ʾllāh*], he will surely be granted compensation for it, in the form of a light on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*].

If any servant [of the Lord] emancipates a slave, that freed slave will surely be his ransom from the Fire of Hell [*Nār Jahannam*], one limb for every limb.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ,¹⁰⁵ al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

If someone performs the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt al-ghadhāh*] in his place of worship [*masjid*], then remains in a sitting posture, remembering Allāh (Exalted is He) until the sun rises—and if, once it has risen, he praises Allāh (Exalted is He) and stands up to perform two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*]—Allāh will grant him, for each cycle, a million [*alf alf*] palatial mansions in the Garden of Paradise. Inside each palatial mansion, there will be a million heavenly brides [*ḥawrāʾ*],¹⁰⁶ and each heavenly bride will be accompanied by a million menservants. Moreover, in the sight of Allāh, that worshipper will be one of those who truly repent [*al-awwābin*].¹⁰⁷

As reported on the authority of Nāfiʿ, it was Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said: “When Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the ritual

¹⁰⁵ **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdīllāh ibn al-Bannāʾ—al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹⁰⁶ See note 9 on p. 9 above.

¹⁰⁷ This is an allusion to the verse [*āya*] of the Qurʾān:

Your Lord is best aware of what is in your souls.
If you are righteous, He is ever Forgiving
to those who truly repent. (17:25)

*Rabbu-kum aʿlamu bi-mā fi nufūsi-kum:
in kuntum ṣāliḥīna fa-inna-hu kāna
li-l-awwābina Ghafīrā.*

prayer of dawn [*ṣalla 'l-fajr*], he would not get up from his sitting position [*majlis*], until the prayer itself enabled him to do so.”

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper performs the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ*], then stays in his sitting position [*majlis*] until the prayer itself enables him [to get up], that prayer will be at the same degree as a Pilgrimage [*Ḥajj*] and a Visitation [*‘Umra*], both of which have been accepted.

When Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) performed the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt al-ghadāh*], he used to remain in a sitting posture until the rising of the sun. Someone asked him: “Why do you do this?” So he explained: “I regard it as the established customary practice [*sunna*].”¹⁰⁸

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’,¹⁰⁹ Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper performs the [prescribed] ritual prayer of the dawn [*ṣalāt aṣ-fajr*], in a congregation [*jamā‘a*], then withdraws in seclusion [*‘akafa*] until the rising of the sun, then performs four consecutive cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer [*raka‘āt mutawāliyyāt*], reciting in the first cycle [*rak‘a*]:

- the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*],
- the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]¹¹⁰—three times, and
- the Sūra that begins with:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1) *qul Huwa ’llāhu Aḥad.*

—seven times; then, in the second cycle [*rak‘a*]:

- the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*]—one time only, and:
- the Sūra that begins with:

By the sun and its brightness. (91:1) *wa ’sh-shamsi wa ḍuhā-hā*

—then, in the third cycle [*rak‘a*]:

- the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*], and:
- the Sūra that begins with:

By the heaven and the morning star. (86:1) *wa ’s-samā’i wa ’ṭ-ṭāriq.*

¹⁰⁸ See n. 57 on p. 52 above.

¹⁰⁹ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—‘Ikrima—Ibn ‘Abbās** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹¹⁰ Q. 2:225

and then, in the fourth cycle [*rak'at*]:

- the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*], and
- the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]*—*one time only, and
- the Sūra that begins with:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1) *qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad.*

*—*three times, Allāh (Exalted is He) will send seventy angels to him, ten angels from each of the seven heavens. They will come bearing trays peculiar to the Garden of Paradise, as well as handkerchiefs [*manādīl*] peculiar to the Garden of Paradise, and they will load that prayer [*ṣalāt*] onto those trays, then they will carry it aloft. Whenever they pass by a company of the angels, they will seek forgiveness on behalf of the owner of the prayer, and when it is placed between the hands of the All-Compelling One [*al-Jabbār*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will say: “My servant, you have performed the ritual prayer for My sake [*li ṣallaita*], and Me you have worshipped [*liyyā-ya 'abadta*], so start work anew, for I have forgiven you!”

This ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] provides us with an explanatory interpretation [*tafsīr*] of the following saying, reported by Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) from his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He):

O son of Adam, you must perform, for My sake, four cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣalli araba'ā raka'āt*] in the first part of the day, so that I may grant you sufficient recompense for so doing.

Some of the commentators have interpreted this as referring to the ritual prayer of the dawn [*ṣalāt*], [counting the two cycles of] its obligatory performance [*farḍ*] and [the two cycles of] its customarily recommended counterpart [*masnūn*]. The correct interpretation, however, is the one we have mentioned above.



Concerning the second litany [*wird*] of the daytime.

As for the second litany [*wird*] of the daytime, it coincides with the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*],¹¹¹ which is also known as the ritual prayer of those who truly repent [*ṣalāt al-awwābīn*].¹¹²

Is the regular performance of this prayer a recommended practice, or not? There are two conflicting answers to this question, according to the doctrine of our [Ḥanbalī] colleagues. The basic guidance on this subject is contained in the following traditional reports:

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',¹¹³ Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] is the ritual prayer of those who truly repent [*ṣalāt al-awwābīn*].

According to another report, transmitted by the same chain of authorities [*isnād*], he also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

The ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] is the greater part of the ritual prayer of David [*ṣalāt Dāwūd*] (peace be upon him).

Shaikh Abū Naṣr has informed us¹¹⁴ that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

One of the gates of the Garden of Paradise is called "The Forenoon [*aḍ-ḍuḥā*]." When the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*] is at hand, an angelic herald will cry out: "Where are those who used to perform the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*], making it their regular practice? Cause them to enter the Garden of Paradise, through the mercy of Allāh!"

¹¹¹ See n. 98 on p. 83 above.

¹¹² See n. 107 on p. 87 above.

¹¹³ **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdī'llāh ibn al-Bannā'**—**Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr**—**Abū Salama**—**Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹¹⁴ **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from **Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

In the time of the Commander of the Faithful [*Amīr al-Mu'minīn*], 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and that of 'Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), the worshippers used to perform the [prescribed] ritual prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ*], then they would wait for the moment assigned to the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*], and perform it in the mosque [*masjid*].

As reported on the authority of aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qais, Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: “At a certain stage in time, we realized that we did not understand the significance of this Qur'ānic verse [*āya*]:

They proclaim the glory [of the Lord] in the evening and at sunrise. (38:18)	<i>yusabbiḥūna</i> <i>bi'l-ʿashiyyi wa'l-ishrāqī.</i>
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—until we noticed people performing the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*].

It was Ibn Abī Makīla (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: “Someone asked Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) about the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*], so he replied: ‘It is definitely mentioned in the Book of Allāh (Exalted is He).’ Then he recited this Qur'ānic verse [*āya*]:

In houses [of worship] Allāh has allowed to be raised up, and in which [He has allowed] His Name to be commemorated; glorifying Him therein, in the mornings and the evenings (24:36)	<i>fī buyūtīn</i> <i>adhina 'llāhu an turfa'a</i> <i>wa yudhkaru</i> <i>fī-ha 'smu-hu</i> <i>yusabbiḥu la-hu</i> <i>fī-hā bi'l-ghuduwwi wa 'l-āṣāl.</i>
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“Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) would often perform the two cycles of the forenoon prayer [*rak'atayī 'ḍ-ḍuḥā*], but he did not become completely addicted to it.”

This explains why, when 'Ikrima was asked about how Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) performed the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*], he replied: “He used to perform it one day, then leave it out for ten.”

It was an-Nakha'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said: “They [the Companions] used to disapprove of making the ritual prayer

of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*] a regular practice, so they would sometimes perform it, and sometimes leave it out, to keep it from acquiring the same status as those prayers that are strictly prescribed [*maktūba*].”



Concerning the number of cycles [*raka'āt*] to be performed in the forenoon prayer [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*].¹¹⁵

As for the number of cycles [*raka'āt*] required in the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*], the minimum is two cycles, the best medium is eight cycles, and the maximum is twelve cycles. With respect to the two cycles [*rak'atān*], as we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',¹¹⁶ Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Within the human body there are three hundred and sixty joints. It is therefore incumbent upon the human being to make a charitable donation on behalf of every single joint—one charitable donation [*ṣadaqa*] each day [of the year].

His listeners asked: “And who is capable of that, O Messenger of Allāh?” So he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

[It will count as a charitable donation] if someone notices a clot of phlegm or mucus in the mosque [*masjid*], and takes the trouble to bury it, or if he clears some nuisance from the path. If he cannot [do anything like that], the two cycles of the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] will adequately compensate for it.

We may also cite the traditional report [*ḥadīth*] of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said: “My bosom friend [*khalīlī*] Abu'l-Qāsim¹¹⁷ (Allāh bless him and give him peace) alerted me to the value of three practices: (1) the *witr* prayer before going to sleep, (2) devoting three days out of every month to fasting, and (3) the two cycles of the forenoon prayer [*rak'atayī 'ḍ-ḍuḥā*].”

¹¹⁵ See note 98 on p. 83 above.

¹¹⁶ **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his own father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from 'Abdu'llāh ibn Buraida—his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹¹⁷ See n. 51 on p. 43 above.

According to one traditional report, however, four cycles are required. This has been mentioned in a previous subsection, where we cited the relevant saying [*ḥadīth*] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), transmitted by ‘Ikrima on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

As reported by Mu‘ādha, ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said: “The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*], sometimes as a prayer of four, but then sometimes as one of six cycles [*raka‘āt*].”

As reported on the authority of Ḥamīd aṭ-Ṭawīl, it was Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: “The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform the the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*], sometimes as a prayer of six cycles, but then sometimes as one of eight cycles [*raka‘āt*].”

According to another report, this one transmitted on the authority of ‘Ikrima ibn Khālid, it was Umm Hāni’ bint Abū Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with her) who said: “When Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) approached [the city], at the time of the conquest—the conquest of Mecca [*fath Makka*—he made a halt on the upper side of Mecca, while he performed a ritual prayer of eight cycles [*raka‘āt*]. So I asked: “O Messenger of Allāh, what is this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]?” He said (Allāh bless him and give him peace): “The ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*].”

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh the Exalted bestow His mercy upon him) declared: “It is reliably established,” and the preferred choice, in the opinion of the experts in religious knowledge (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them all), is definitely eight cycles [*raka‘āt*].¹¹⁸ Should further confirmation be needed, we could cite yet another traditional report, transmitted by Abū Sa‘īd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) from the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

As far as ‘Ā’isha is concerned (may Allāh be well pleased with her), she is also reported as having performed the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*] as a prayer of eight cycles [*raka‘āt*]. In the words of al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): “‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) would often perform the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt ad-ḍuḥā*] as a prayer of eight cycles

¹¹⁸ See note 98 on p. 83 above.

[*raka'āt*], and she would spend a long time in the process. While she was performing it, she would keep her door locked. Then again, if she preferred, she would perform ten cycles, or even twelve cycles [*raka'āt*], the latter being her favorite option.”

This should come as no surprise, for, as we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr,¹¹⁹ Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

If a worshipper performs the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*], as a prayer of twelve cycles [*raka'āt*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will have a golden palace built for him in the Garden of Paradise.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr has also informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,¹²⁰ that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper performs twelve cycles of ritual prayer [*raka'āt*], in the daytime, Allāh (Exalted is He) will have a house built for him in the Garden of Paradise.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr,¹²¹ Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once turned to Abū Dharr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) and said:

O Abū Dharr, the daytime consists of twelve hours, so you must be ready to provide one act of bowing [*rak'a*]¹²² and two acts of prostration [*sajdatain*] for each of those hours, for that will ward off from you whatever sin it may harbor.

O Abū Dharr, if a worshipper performs two cycles of prayer [*rak'atain*], he will not be included among the heedless. If someone performs four, he will be

¹¹⁹ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdī’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—Ḥamza ibn Mūsā ibn Anas ibn Mālik al-Anṣārī—his uncle, Thumāma ibn Anas—his grandfather, Anas ibn Mālik** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹²⁰ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from **Umm Ḥabība** (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

¹²¹ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdī’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—Ibrāhīm at-Taimī—his father—Abū Dharr** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹²² The term *rak'a* [an act of bowing] has acquired an extended meaning, since it is generally used to denote the whole series of movements and postures—including the bowing posture [*rakū'*]—that constitute one cycle of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. (The dual and plural forms, corresponding to the singular form *rak'a*, are *rak'atān/ain* and *raka'āt*, respectively.)

recorded as one of those who practice remembrance. If someone performs six, no sin will stick to him that day, unless it be that of associating partners [*shirk*] with Allāh (Exalted is He). If someone performs twelve cycles of prayer, a house will be constructed for him in the Garden of Paradise.

When Abū Dharr heard this, he said: “O Messenger of Allāh, [should they be performed] in combination, or separately?” He replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace): “You need not concern yourself with that [*lā ‘alaik*].”



Concerning the proper time [*waqt*] for the performance of the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*].

As for the proper time [*waqt*] for its performance, there are actually two such times. The first, which is simply permissible [*jā'iz*], is the period after the rising of the sun, until the [prescribed] prayer of noon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuhr*]. The other, which is positively recommended [*mustahabb*], is the time when the young camels, newly weaned from their mothers, are seriously affected by the scorching heat [*turmaḍu 'l-fiṣāl*],¹²³ at the point when the sun is about to decline from the meridian [*'inda qurb aḍ-ḍawāl*]. In support of the recommended status assigned to its performance at this latter time, we may cite the following as evidence:

According to a traditional report, Zaid ibn Arqam (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once noticed a group of people performing the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*yuṣallūna 'ḍ-ḍuḥā*] in the mosque [*masjid*] of Qubā'. So he said: "As you must surely be aware, it is more meritorious to perform the prayer [*ṣalāt*] at a different hour from this! Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has said:

"The ritual prayer of those who truly repent [*ṣalāt al-awwābīn*]¹²⁴ [should be performed] at the time when the young camels, newly weaned from their mothers [*fiṣāl*], are seriously affected by the scorching heat [*turmaḍu 'l-fiṣāl*]."

It must also be permissible to perform it after the sun's decline from the meridian, in view of the report from 'Awf ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The hour of the supererogatory prayer [*sā'at as-subḥa*] is moment when the sun declines from the center of the sky.

¹²³ Some say that this expression accounts for the name of the month of Ramaḍān. (See Vol. 3, p. 79.)

¹²⁴ See p. 90 above.

It is also known as the ritual prayer of those who humble themselves [*ṣalāt al-mukhbiṭīn*]. The best time for its performance is when the heat of the day is extremely intense. If a worshipper has not performed it by the time he performs the [prescribed] ritual prayer of noon [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*], he should make up for it later, in accordance with the [abovementioned] recommendation [*istiḥbāb*].



Concerning the Qurʾānic recitation appropriate to the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*].

As for the Qurʾānic recitation appropriate to the the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*], Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

The ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] should include the recitation of the Sūra [that begins with]:

By the sun and its brightness. (91:1) *wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥā-hā*

—and [the Sūra of] the Bright Forenoon [*Surat aḍ-Ḍuḥā*].¹²⁵

According to one traditional report,¹²⁶ Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

When a worshipper performs the twelve cycles of the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*], he should recite in each cycle [*rak'at*]:

- the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*]—one time only,
- the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]¹²⁷—one time only, and
- [the Sūra that begins with]:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!” (112:1) *qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad*—three times.

Seventy thousand angels will thereupon descend from every heaven, bearing white sheets of paper and pens made of light, and they will go on recording good deeds in his favor, until the blast is blown on the Trumpet. Then, when the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*] has arrived, the angels will come to him, and each of the angels will bring a fine suit of clothes and a gift. They will stand by his grave, and they will say: “O occupant of the grave, arise, by the permission of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), for you are one of those who are safe and secure [*āminīn*].”

¹²⁵ The Sūra of the Bright Forenoon [*Surat aḍ-Ḍuḥā*] is the 93rd Sūra of the Qurʾān. (In some translations, it is entitled “The Sūra of the Morning Hours.”)

¹²⁶ **Author's note:** The chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report goes back to: ‘Urwa ibn Shuʿaib—his father—his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹²⁷ Q. 2:255.

Traditional reports unfavorable to the practice of the forenoon prayer [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*].

It has been reported that some of the Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) denied the validity of the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*]. According to one such report,¹²⁸ Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said:

“I have never performed the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*] since I first accepted Islām [*aslamtu*], except when I am circumambulating the House [*uṭawwif bi’l-Bait*]. It is an innovation [*bid‘a*], albeit an excellent innovation, and it is surely one of the best practices that people have invented!”

Ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) used to say, on the subject of the ritual prayer of the forenoon [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*]: “O servants of Allāh, do not burden the people with something that Allāh has not required them to carry. If you insist on doing it regardless, perform it [*ṣallū-hā*] in your own houses.”

None of this points to the negation of what we have mentioned previously, concerning the excellent merits traditionally ascribed to its performance. In making such remarks, they simply intended to emphasize that it should not be likened to the obligatory ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-fard*], in case people became convinced of its compulsory status. People are not all equal, in terms of the energy [*nashāt*] available for religious service [*‘ibāda*], so they sought to lighten their load, and tried to make it easier for them to practice worshipful obedience [*tā‘a*]. This is borne out by the implicit significance of the report of ‘Utbān ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the supererogatory prayer of the forenoon [*subḥat aḍ-ḍuḥā*] in his own

¹²⁸ **Author’s note:** This report has been related by Ibn al-Munādī, one of our own [Ḥanbalī] colleagues, who supplies a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

apartment, so those who were present stood behind him and performed the prayer too.”

Then again, whenever ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) intended to perform it, she would lock the door. As for Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), he would perform it one day, then leave it out for ten.



Concerning the third litany [*wird*] of the daytime.

As for the third litany [*wird*] of the daytime, it coincides with the [voluntary] ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] before and after the [prescribed prayer of] noon [*qabla'z-zuhr wa ba'da-hā*]. According to the traditional report we have received from Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā',¹²⁹ [the Prophet's wife] Umm Ḥabība (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once said:

“If a worshipper performs four [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*raka'āt*] before the [prescribed prayer of] noon [*zuhr*], and four after it, Allāh (Exalted is He) will make his flesh unlawful to the Fire of Hell.”

It has been said that the gates of Heaven are held open, as are those of the Garden of Paradise, from just after the sun's decline from the meridian [*zawāl*], until the noon prayer [*zuhr*] is performed. This explains why prayers of supplication [*da'awāt*], as it has also been said, are sure to be answered at this hour. It also explains why one is recommended to make a constant practice, at this hour, of worshipful service [*ibāda*], supplication [*du'ā'*], and remembrance [*dhikr*].

Highly relevant, in this context, is the traditional report [*ḥadīth*] from Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who said: “The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to devote himself assiduously to four cycles of prayer [*raka'āt*] before the [prescribed prayer of] noon [*zuhr*]. People were curious about this, so he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

The gates of the Garden of Paradise are held open at the moment of the sun's decline from the meridian [*zawāl*], and they are not bolted shut until the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is begun. So I like to be well to the fore!

¹²⁹ **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from **Umm Ḥabība** (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) was once asked: “To which ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] was Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) most fond of applying himself with special diligence?” To this she replied (may Allāh be well pleased with her): “He used to perform four [cycles of prayer] (Allāh bless him and give him peace) before the [prescribed prayer of] noon [*ẓuhr*], prolonging the standing posture [*qiyām*] in each of them, and making the very best, in each of them, of the acts of bowing [*rukū’*] and prostration [*sujūd*].”



Concerning the fourth litany [*wird*] of the daytime.

As for the fourth litany [*wird*] of the daytime, it is performed in the interval between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon [*ẓuhr*] and afternoon [*‘aṣr*].

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ has informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,¹³⁰ that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone enlivens the interval between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon [*ẓuhr*] and afternoon [*‘aṣr*], Allāh will keep his heart alive, even on the day when [all other] hearts die.

Tradition tells us that Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) used to enliven the interval between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon [*ẓuhr*] and afternoon [*‘aṣr*].

Ibrāhīm an-Nakha’ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said: “They [the early believers] used to liken the [voluntary] ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] performed between the two [prescribed] evening prayers [*al-‘ishā’ain*],¹³¹ and that performed between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon [*ẓuhr*] and afternoon [*‘aṣr*], to the ritual prayer of the nighttime [*ṣalāt al-lail*].¹³² That was the regular practice of many of the servants [of the Lord], for they used to perform their litany-prayers [*yuṣallūna awrāda-hum*] between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon [*ẓuhr*] and afternoon [*‘aṣr*]. During this hour, they would isolate themselves from creatures [*khalq*], and devote

¹³⁰ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—‘Umar ibn Aḥmad—‘Abdu’llāh ibn Muḥammad—Ṣāliḥ ibn Mālik—Ja’far ibn ‘Umar—Yūnus ibn ‘Amra—‘Aṭā’—Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹³¹ That is to say, between the prescribed prayers of sunset [*maghrib*] and late evening [*‘ishā’*]. (See pp. 27–30 above.)

¹³² See pp. 68 and 82 above.

themselves exclusively to the Lord of Truth [*Haqq*]. It is a noble hour, appropriately devoted to seclusion [*khalwa*] with the Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), and to His remembrance [*dhikr*]. It is an hour when prayer is the antidote to heedlessness.”

In the interval between the [prescribed ritual prayers of] noon [*zuhr*] and afternoon [*ʿaṣr*], the worshipper is recommended to practice seclusion [*iʿtikāf*] in the mosque [*masjid*], for the purpose of [voluntary] prayer [*ṣalāt*] and remembrance [*dhikr*], in order to combine the practice of seclusion [*iʿtikāf*] with the anticipation of the [next prescribed] ritual prayer [*intizār liʿṣ-ṣalāt*]. Such was the regular practice of our righteous predecessors [*as-salaf*]. An exception must be made, however, in the case of someone who has failed to catch any sleep before the sun’s decline from the meridian [*zawāl*]. He should sleep during this hour, so as to fortify himself in preparation for the night vigil [*qiyām al-lail*]. His sleeping should properly be done before the time of the noon prayer [*qabla ʿz-zuhr*], to make up for the previous night, and after the time of the noon prayer [*baʿda ʿz-zuhr*], in preparation for the night that lies ahead. He is not recommended to sleep for more than eight hours [all told], but anything less than this amount of sleep, it has been said, is likely to result in some kind of physical disturbance, because sleep is the nourishment and refreshment of the physical body.

Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ has also informed us, citing traditional authority for his report,¹³³ that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer, every day, Allāh will have a house built for him in the Garden of Paradise. Two [of these twelve] should be performed before the [prescribed prayer of] daybreak [*qabla ʿl-fajr*], four of them before the [prescribed prayer of] noon [*qabla ʿz-zuhr*], two of them after the [prescribed prayer of] noon [*baʿda ʿz-zuhr*], two of them before the [prescribed prayer of the] afternoon [*qabla ʿl-ʿaṣr*], and two of them after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset [*baʿda ʿl-maghrib*].

As reported on the authority of Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib, ʿĀʾisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) said that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

As for those who perform four [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*al-muṣallīna li-arbaʿ*], before the [prescribed prayer of the] afternoon [*qabla ʿl-ʿaṣr*], they will not have time to finish before Allāh grants them forgiveness, quite definitely.

¹³³ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannāʾ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: **His own father, Shaikh Abū ʿAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdīllāh ibn al-Bannāʾ—Sahl—his [Sahl’s] father—Abū Huraira** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

A traditional saying [*ḥadīth*] that refers in general to supererogatory devotions [*nawāfil*] at these times.

In one traditional saying [*ḥadīth*] that has come down to us, we find a general reference to all supererogatory devotions [*nawāfil*] at these particular times of the day. According to this report, which has been conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr, with a list of transmitting authorities,¹³⁴ Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a worshipper performs six cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer [*ṣallā sitta raka‘āt*], after the [prescribed prayer of] sunset [*ba‘da’l-maghrib*] and before he has talked to anybody, they will be raised up for him to the Highest Heaven [‘*Ilīyūn*]. He will be just like someone who is present on the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] in the Farthest Mosque [*al-Masjid al-Aqṣā*],¹³⁵ and that is better than devoting half a night to vigil. These devotions are referred to in the words of Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He):

They used to sleep only a little during the night, and with the dawning of each day they would seek forgiveness. (51:17,18)	<i>kānū qalīlan mina ‘l-laili mā yahja‘ūn: wa bi’l-ashāri hum yastaghfirūn.</i>
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—and in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Their sides shun their couches, as they call on their Lord in fear and hope. (32:16)	<i>tatajāfā junūbu-hum ‘ani ‘l-maḍājī‘i yad‘ūna Rabba-hum khawfan wa ṭama‘ā.</i>
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—and also in the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

And he entered the city at a time when its people were unheeding, and there he found two men fighting;	<i>wa dakhala ‘l-madīnata ‘alā ḥīni ghaflatin min ahli-hā fa-wajada fi-hā rajulaini yaqtatilāni</i>
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¹³⁴ **Author’s note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’ cites the following chain of transmission [*isnād*] for this report: His own father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn al-Bannā’—Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥāfiẓ—Muḥammad ibn Badr al-Ḥumārī—Ḥammād ibn Mudrik—‘Uthmān ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ash-Shāmi—Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm—‘Abdu’llāh ibn Abī Sa‘īd—Ṭawūs—‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

¹³⁵ **Author’s note:** That is to say, in the Mosque of the Temple [in Jerusalem] [*Masjid Bait al-Maqdis*].

the one was of his own party,
and the other was of his enemies.
Then the one who was
of his own party appealed to him
for help against the other
who was of his enemies.
So Moses struck him with his fist,
and dispatched him.
He said: "This is of Satan's doing;
he is surely an enemy,
an obvious misleader. (28:15)

*hādḥā min shī'ati-hi
wa hādḥā min 'aduwwi-h:
fa-'staghātha-hu 'lladhī
min shī'ati-hi
'ala 'lladhī min
'aduwwi-hi
fa-wakaza-hu Mūsā
fa-qaḍā 'alai-h:
qāla hādḥā min 'amali 'sh-shaitān:
inna-hu 'aduwūm
muḍillun mubīn.*

If a worshipper performs four [voluntary cycles], after the [prescribed] ritual prayer of late evening [*al-'ishā' al-ākḥira*], he will be just like one who arrives in time to experience the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*] in the Sacred Mosque [*Masjid al-Ḥarām*]."

If a worshipper performs four [voluntary cycles] before the [prescribed prayer of] noon [*ẓuhr*], and four after it, Allāh (Exalted is He) will forbid the Fire of Hell ever to consume his physical body.

If a worshipper performs four [voluntary cycles] before the [prescribed prayer of the] afternoon [*ʿaṣr*], Allāh will record him as entitled to immunity from the Fire of Hell.

As reported by Nāfi', on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

The two cycles of the ritual prayer of daybreak [*rak' atā' l-fajr*] are dearer to me than this world and all that it contains.

As we are reliably informed by Shaikh Abū Naṣr,¹³⁶ 'Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh ennoble his countenance) was once asked about the supererogatory worship [*taṭawwu'*] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so he said: "Who is capable of that? He used to wait until the sun was as far to his left as it would be to his right at the time of the [prescribed prayer of the] afternoon [*ʿaṣr*], at which point he would perform two cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer [*rak' atain*].¹³⁷ When it was as far to his left as it would be to his right at the time of [the prescribed prayer of] noon [*ẓuhr*], he would perform four [voluntary cycles of prayer]. When the sun declined from the meridian, he would perform four [prescribed cycles of prayer]. He would then perform two

¹³⁶ **Author's note:** Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā' narrates this report on the authority of his father, citing a chain of transmission [*isnād*] from 'Alī (may Allāh ennoble his countenance).

¹³⁷ When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was in Medina, and facing the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], the sun would rise on his left and set on his right.

[voluntary] cycles [*rak'atāin*] after the [prescribed prayer of] noon [*ẓuhr*], and four before the [prescribed prayer of the] afternoon [*'aṣr*].”

To put all this in a nutshell, the servant [of the Lord] should seize the opportunity, after the call to prayer [*adhān*] and at the time of the final announcement [*iqāma*] [immediately before the prescribed prayer],¹³⁸ to perform a [voluntary] prayer [*ṣalāt*], and to offer supplication [*du'ā'*] and humble entreaty [*taḍarru'*], for it is a moment when the supplicant can expect a positive response, as we have previously explained.



¹³⁸ See notes 303 and 304 on p. 225 below.

Concerning the fifth litany [*wird*] of the daytime.

As for the fifth litany [*wird*] of the daytime, it is performed in the interval between the [prescribed] ritual prayer of the afternoon [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*] and the setting of the sun. It consists entirely of remembrance [*dhikr*], in the form of glorifying the Lord [*tasbīḥ*],¹³⁹ affirming His Uniqueness [*tahlīl*],¹⁴⁰ seeking His forgiveness [*istighfār*], reflecting on the Heavenly Kingdom [*tafakkur fi 'l-Malakūt*], and reciting the Qurʾān, because the performance of supererogatory ritual prayer [*ṣalāt an-nāfila*] is forbidden during this period of time.

Before the setting of the sun, the worshipper should recite [the Sūras that begin with]:

By the sun and its brightness.... (91:1) *wa 'sh-shamsi wa ḍuhā-hā....*

—and:

By the night when it is enshrouding.... *wa 'l-laili idhā yaghshā....*
(92:1)

Then he should recite the Two Pleas for Refuge [*al-Muʿawwidhatāin*],¹⁴¹ thereby marking the end of his day. He should also begin his night by reciting the Qurʾān and seeking refuge [*istiʿādha*].

As reported on the authority of al-Ḥasan (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, while mentioning the mercy of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Allāh (Exalted is He) has said: “O son of Adam, remember Me after the ritual prayer of the daybreak [*ṣalāt al-fajr*], for an hour, and after the ritual prayer of the afternoon [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*], for an hour, for then I shall protect you in the interval between the two.”

¹³⁹ See n. 11 on p. 9 above.

¹⁴⁰ See n. 10 on p. 9 above.

¹⁴¹ That is to say, the two Sūras that begin with:

Say: “I take refuge
with the Lord of the Daybreak.” (113:1)

*qul a 'ūdhu
bi-Rabbi 'l-falaq.*

— and:

Say: “I take refuge
with the Lord of mankind.” (114:1)

*qul a 'ūdhu
bi-Rabbi 'n-nās.*

CHAPTER EIGHT

Concerning the five daily ritual prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*], with an account of their times of performance, their customary elements [*sunan*], and their special qualities.

1.

Concerning the number of cycles [*raka'āt*] to be performed in each of the prescribed ritual prayers.

The prescribed ritual prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-maktūba*] are five in number, namely:

1. The dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*], which consists of two cycles [*rak'ātān*].
2. The noon prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*], which consists of four cycles [*arba' raka'āt*].
3. The afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*], which consists of four cycles [*arba' raka'āt*].
4. The sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*], which consists of three cycles [*thalāth raka'āt*].
5. The late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿishāʿ*], the last of the five, which consists of four cycles [*arba' raka'āt*].

This adds up to a daily total of seventeen cycles [*sab' ʿashara rak'a*].

Fifty prayers had been prescribed as obligatory on the Night of the Heavenly Ascension [*Lailat al-Mi'rāj*], the night when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was transported on his Heavenly Journey [*Isrāʿ*]. But then the number was brought back down to five, as a dispensation of wisdom [*ḥikma*] on the part of Allāh, so that the burden He still imposed would seem light and easy, in contrast with that

from which He had exempted His believing servants. By a similar act of dispensation, He relieved them of the duty to stand firm in battle with the unbelievers [*kāfirīn*] when the ratio was ten to one against them, and reduced the ratio to that of two to one against them. He likewise canceled the prohibition of eating, drinking, and engaging in sexual intercourse after sleep during the nights of fasting [in the month of Ramaḍān], by His pronouncement:

It has been made lawful for you,
on the night of the Fast,
to go in to your wives;
they are a garment for you,
and you are a garment for them.

*uḥilla la-kum
lailata 'ṣ-ṣiyāmi 'r-rafathu
ilā nisā' i-kum:
hunna libāsun la-kum
wa antum libāsun la-hun:*

Allāh knows that you have been
deceiving yourselves, and He has
relented toward you and pardoned you.

*'alima 'llāhu anna-kum kuntum
takhtānūna anfusa-kum
fa-tāba 'alai-kum wa 'afā 'an-kum:*

So now have intercourse with them,
and seek that which
Allāh has prescribed for you.

*fa-'l-āna bāshirū-hunna
wa 'btaghū mā
kataba 'llāhu la-kum:*

And eat and drink until the white
thread becomes distinct to you from
the black thread of the dawn. (2:187)

*wakulū wa 'shrabū ḥattā yatabayyana
la-kumu 'l-khaiṭu 'l-abyaḍu
mina 'l-khaiṭi 'l-aswadi mina 'l-fajr.*

All this had previously been declared unlawful for them.



2.

Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*] and Prophetic traditions [*akhbār*] relating to the obligatory status [*wujūb*] of the five daily prayers, and to the proper times [*awqāt*] for their performance.

As far as the obligatory status [*wujūb*] of the five daily prayers is concerned, the principle is established on the basis of His imperative statement (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And perform the ritual prayer,	<i>wa aqīmu 'ṣ-ṣalāta</i>
and pay the alms-due,	<i>wa ātu 'z-zakāta</i>
and bow your heads with those	<i>wa 'rka'ū</i>
who bow [in worship]. (2:43)	<i>ma'a 'r-rāki'īn.</i>

When it comes to defining the correct times [*awqāt*] for the performance of the five daily prayers, the authoritative sources include both Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*] and Prophetic traditions [*akhbār*].¹⁴²

1. As for the relevant Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*], they are as follows:¹⁴³
 - a) The words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So proclaim the glory of Allāh	<i>fa-subhāna 'llāhi</i>
when you enter upon	<i>hīma</i>
the evening time,	<i>tumsūna</i>
and when you enter upon	<i>wa hīma</i>
the morning time—	<i>tuṣbihūn</i>
and to Him belongs the praise,	<i>wa la-hu 'l-ḥamdu</i>
in the heavens and the earth—	<i>fi 's-samā' i wa 'l-arḍi</i>
and when the sun is well on the wane,	<i>wa 'ashiyyan</i>
and when you enter	<i>wa hīma</i>
upon the noontime hour.	<i>tuzhirūn.</i>

(30:17,18)

¹⁴² As used by the narrators of tradition, the term *khavar* (of which *akhbār* is the plural form) is sometimes synonymous with *ḥadīth*, meaning a report than can be traced all the way back to the Prophet Muḥammad himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), whether the substance of that report be a saying of his or a description of his behavior in a certain situation. In some cases, however, the term *khavar* is applied to a tradition that may well have originated with the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), but which can only be traced with certainty to one of his Companions, or to some other reliable early source.

¹⁴³ In view of the wide range of traditional interpretation applied to the original Arabic, no English translation of these Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*] can be regarded as strictly precise!

That is to say: “So proclaim the glory of Allāh by performing the ritual prayers for the sake of Allāh:¹⁴⁴ When you enter upon the evening time, perform the sunset and late evening prayers [*ṣalāt al-maghrib wa 'l-‘ishā’*]; when you enter upon the morning time, perform the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*]; when the sun is well on the wane, perform the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘aṣr*]; and when you enter upon the noontime hour, perform the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-ḡuhr*].”

b) He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Surely the ritual prayer is a timed prescription for the believers. (4:103)	<i>inna 'ṣ-ṣalāta kānat ‘ala 'l-mu’ minīna kitāban mauqūṭā.</i>
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c) He has said (Exalted is He):

And perform the ritual prayer at the two ends of the day and in some watches of the night. (11:114)	<i>wa aqimi 'ṣ-ṣalāta ṭarafayi 'n-nahāri wa ḡulafan minā 'l-lail.</i>
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d) He has also said (Exalted is He):

Perform the ritual prayer at the sinking of the sun. (17:78)	<i>aqimi 'ṣ-ṣalāta li-dulūki 'sh-shamsi.</i>
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In other words, at its setting [*ghurūb*]; or, according to some authorities, at the time of its decline from the meridian [*zawāl*].

e) He has said (Magnificent is His Majesty Sublime):

And extol the praise of your Lord before the rising of the sun, and before its setting, and extol [the praise of your Lord] in the watches of the night, and at the ends of the day, so that you may earn His good pleasure. (20:130)	<i>wa sabbih bi-ḡamdi Rabbi-ka qabla ṭulū‘i 'sh-shamsi wa qabla ghurūbi-hā: wa min ānā‘i 'l-laili fa-sabbih wa aṭrāfa 'n-nahāri la‘ alla-ka tardā.</i>
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Qatāda¹⁴⁵ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has offered the following interpretation of this Qur’ānic verse [*āya*]:

¹⁴⁴ During the Islāmic ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], the glorification of the Lord [*tasbiḡ*] is uttered each time the worshipper adopts the postures of bowing [*rukū‘*] and prostration [*sujūd*]. While adopting the bowing posture, one says: “*Subḡāna Rabbiya 'l-‘Aḡīm* [Glory to my Lord, the Almighty!]” and when in prostration: “*Subḡāna Rabbiya 'l-A‘lā* [Glory to my Lord, the Most High!]”

¹⁴⁵ Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb Qatāda ibn Di‘āma ibn Qatāda as-Sadūsī. Learned in Qur’ānic exegesis [*tafsīr*] and Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], he was also an authority on Arabic poetry. He died in A.H. 118 (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

“Before the rising of the sun comes the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*]; **before its setting** comes the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘aṣr*]; **in the watches of the night** come the sunset and late evening prayers [*ṣalāt al-maghrib wa ‘l-‘ishā’*]; **and at the point between the ends of the day** comes the midday prayer [*ṣalāt aḡ-zuḥr*].”

2. As for the relevant Prophetic traditions [*akhbār*], it is sufficient to cite the report transmitted on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father). According to this report, Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to visit me beside the House [the House of Allāh; the Ka‘ba]. There he led me in the midday prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘z-zuḥr*], as soon as the sun had declined from the meridian, just enough to lengthen a shadow by the width of the strap of a sandal [*shirāk*]. Then he led me in the afternoon prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘l-‘aṣr*], when the length of every shadow had become equal to the height of the corresponding object. Then he led me in the sunset prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘l-maghrib*], at the time when the person who was fasting broke his fast. Then he led me in the late evening prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘l-‘ishā’*], at moment when the final glow of twilight disappeared. Then he led me in the dawn prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘l-fajr*], at the point when food and drink became unlawful for anyone who was fasting.

Then he led me again in the midday prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘z-zuḥr*], but this time it was when the length of every shadow had become equal to the height of the corresponding object. Then he led me again in the afternoon prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘l-‘aṣr*], but this time it was when the length of every shadow had become equal to twice the height of the corresponding object. Then he led me again in the sunset prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘l-maghrib*], and, as on the previous occasion, he did so at the time when the person who was fasting broke his fast. Then he led me again in the late evening prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘l-‘ishā’*], only this time it was near the end of the first third of the night. Then he led me again in the dawn prayer [*ṣallā biya ‘l-fajr*], only this time it was when the glow of daybreak was already shining bright.

Then he turned to me and said: “O Muḥammad, this is the timing of the Prophets [*Anbiyā’*] who came before you, and the timing includes the interval between these two precise moments.”

This particular tradition [*khabar*] represents our basic source for the appointed times [*mawāqīt*] of the five daily prayers. With respect to this subject, several other Prophetic sayings [*ahādīth*]¹⁴⁶ have been handed down to us, but, since they all convey exactly the same meaning as the one just cited, we have decided to refrain from quoting them here.

¹⁴⁶ See note 142 on p. 112 above.

3.

Concerning those who performed these prayers [*ṣalawāt*] before the time of our Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

As we learn from one of the Prophetic traditions [*akhbār*]¹⁴⁷ that have been transmitted to us, a man from among the Helpers [*Anṣār*]¹⁴⁸ once asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*]: “Who performed it for the very first time?” So he informed the man that the first person who ever performed it was Adam (peace be upon him). Then he went on to tell him:

“The midday prayer [*ṣalāt aḡ-ẓuhr*] was performed by Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] (peace be upon him), when Allāh (Exalted is He) delivered him from Nimrod’s fiery furnace.

“The afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘aṣr*] was performed by Jacob [*Ya‘qūb*] (peace be upon him), when Gabriel gave him the news about Joseph [*Yūsuf*] (peace be upon them both).

“The sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*] was performed by David [*Dāwūd*] (peace be upon him), when Allāh relented toward him and accepted his repentance.

“The prayer of the first third of the night [*ṣalāt al-‘atama*]¹⁴⁹ was performed by Jonah, the son of Amittai, [*Yūnus ibn Mattai*] (peace be upon him). When Allāh brought him forth from the belly of the whale, he was emaciated like a chicken that has had all its feathers plucked. It was then that Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to him and said: ‘Allāh (Exalted is He) pronounces the greeting of peace upon you, and He says to you: “I ask you this with diffidence, in view of the torment I have inflicted on you in the realm of the lower world: Are you well pleased with Me?” So he stood up and performed four cycles [*raka‘āt*] of ritual prayer, then he said: ‘I am indeed well pleased with my Lord. Yes, I am truly well pleased with my Lord.’”

¹⁴⁷ See note 142 on p. 112 above.

¹⁴⁸ The *Anṣār* [the Helpers] were the citizens of Medina who had embraced Islām, and who welcomed and supported the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and the *Muhājirīn* [the Emigrés] at the time of the *Hijra* from Mecca to Medina.

¹⁴⁹ Another name for the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘ishā’*].

4.

Concerning the fact that the first two of the ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*] to be enjoined upon our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) were the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] and the sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*].

The first two of the ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*] that were enjoined upon our Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and that he was commanded to perform, were the dawn and sunset prayers [*ṣalāt al-fajr wa 'l-maghrib*].

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) had made the pronouncement:

And extol the praise of your Lord	<i>wa sabbih̄ bi-ḥamdi Rabbi-ka</i>
in the evening and early	<i>bi'l-ʿashīyyi</i>
in the morning. (40:55)	<i>wa 'l-ibkār.</i>

His Messenger therefore made it his regular practice (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to perform two cycles [*rak'atāin*] of ritual prayer in the early morning [*ghadāh*] and two cycles in the evening [*'ashīyy*]. This continued until the Night of the Heavenly Ascension [*Lailat al-Mi'rāj*], the night when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was transported on his Heavenly Journey [*Isrā'*], at which point five daily prayers [*ṣalawāt*] were prescribed for him.

The dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] is actually the first prayer of the daytime [*nahār*], then comes the midday prayer [*ṣalāt aḥ-ḥuḥr*]. It is customary, however, for the religious scholars [*'ulamā'*] to begin their listing and learned treatment of the prayers with the midday prayer [*ṣalāt aḥ-ḥuḥr*]. This custom is based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in the tradition [*ḥadīth*] reported by Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

Gabriel (peace be upon him) came to visit me beside the House [the House of Allāh; the Ka'ba]. There he led me in the midday prayer [*ṣallā biya 'ḥ-ḥuḥr*], as soon as the sun had declined from the meridian, just enough to lengthen a shadow by the width of the strap of a sandal [*shirāk*].¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ See p. 114 above, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has already quoted this tradition [*ḥadīth*] in full.

This tradition [*ḥadīth*] begins with the definition of the timing of the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*]. The scholars have therefore treated the timing [*waqt*] of that prayer as the first of the [five] appointed times [*mawāqīt*], on the grounds that it was the first [of the five daily prayers] to be prescribed as an obligatory religious duty.

As we have already explained, however, the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] was the one performed by Adam (peace be upon him), and he was the first Prophet [*Nabī*], the first member of the human race to be sent on a mission to the earth. In the most general sense, therefore, the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] is known to be the first ritual prayer that was ever prescribed as an obligatory religious duty.



5. Concerning the correct time for the performance of the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*].

The first moment of the time of the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] is the crack of the second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*],¹⁵¹ which presents itself as a gleam of light in the farthest east, extending beyond the Qibla [the direction of the Ka‘ba in Mecca]¹⁵² until it rises and stretches across the horizon, then spreads itself over the peaks of the mountains and over the rooftops of the stately mansions and palaces. The final moment of its time is marked by the brilliant glow that immediately precedes the appearance of the eyebrow of the sun. Between these two points there is a fairly wide space of time.

It is considered commendable to refer to this prayer as the daybreak prayer [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ*] or the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*], and not to call it the early morning prayer [*ṣalāt al-ghadāh*], because Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

And [perform] the recital of dawn;
surely the recital of dawn
is witnessed. (17:78)

*wa qur’āna ‘l-fajr:
inna qur’āna ‘l-fajri
kāna mashūdā.*

That is to say: “The dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] is witnessed by the angels of the night, as well as by the angels of the day, since it takes place during the last watch of the angels who are charged with keeping records through the night, and during the first watch of the angels who are charged with keeping records through the day (peace be upon them all).”

¹⁵¹ The second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*] is also known as the true dawn [*al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq*].

¹⁵² The direction of Jerusalem was the first *Qibla*. According to tradition, it was in the second year of the *Hijra*, in Rajab or Sha‘bān, that the Muslims were commanded to perform their ritual prayers [*ṣalāt*] thenceforth in the direction of the Sacred Mosque [*Masjid al-Ḥarām*] in Mecca, which thus became the second—and permanent—*Qibla*. In Vol. 3, p. 62, Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) tells us:

As it is said: “The Ka‘ba is a *Qibla* [direction of prayer] for the people of the Mosque, the Mosque is a *Qibla* for the people of Mecca, Mecca is a *Qibla* for the people of the Sacred Precinct, and the Sacred Precinct is a *Qibla* for the people of the earth.”

The most meritorious approach is to perform it in the early phase, the stage of semidarkness known as *ghalas*,¹⁵³ although this is contrary to the doctrine of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa,¹⁵⁴ who maintained that there is greater merit in performing it when the light of daybreak is more clearly visible. Our own [Ḥanbalī] doctrine is based on the traditional report transmitted from [the Prophet's wife] ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), in which it is stated that she once said:

“During the lifetime of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the womenfolk used to go out [to the mosque] to perform the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] in his company, then they would return to their homes, with their woolen wrappers draped over their heads, and nobody would recognize them, on account of the lingering darkness [*ghalas*].”

According to another account of his doctrine, however, our own Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbalī]¹⁵⁵ maintained that the most important factor to be considered is the state of those who attend the congregation [*al-ma’ mūmīn*].¹⁵⁶ If they tend to show up closer to daybreak, the time near daybreak is more meritorious, since it makes for an increase in both the size of the gathering and the amount of the spiritual reward.

As for the first dawn [*al-fajr al-awwal*],¹⁵⁷ no significance should be attached to it, because it neither causes anything to become unlawful, nor causes anything to become obligatory. This assertion is based on the statement attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), who is reported as having said:

“The dawn is actually two dawns [*al-fajr fajrān*]. As for the one that results in the performance of the [dawn] prayer becoming lawful, and in

¹⁵³ The text reads: *wa’l-afḍahu’ t-taḡhlisu bihā*. The expression *at-taḡhlisu bi’ ṣ-ṣalāt* means “to perform the [dawn] prayer in the time called *ghalas*.” According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *ghalas* is applied to “the darkness of the last part of the night, when it becomes mixed with the light of dawn; or, the beginning of the dawn, until it spreads in the tracts of the horizon.” (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. GH-L-S.)

¹⁵⁴ Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is the eponymous founder of the Ḥanafī *madhhab*, which is one of the four Sunnī schools of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*]. He died in A.H. 150/767 C.E.

¹⁵⁵ See note 7 on p. 7 above.

¹⁵⁶ In Arabic, the term *ma’ mūm* (of which *ma’ mūmīn* is a plural form) is used to denote someone who performs the ritual prayer behind an *imām*. (Both words are derived from the same triconsonantal root <’-m-m> as the preposition *amāma*, which means “in front of.”)

¹⁵⁷ The first dawn [*al-fajr al-awwal*] is also known as the false dawn [*al-fajr al-kādhīb*].

eating and drinking becoming unlawful [for someone who is keeping the fast], it is the one that spreads out over the peaks of the mountains; that is the one that makes it unlawful [for someone who is keeping the fast to do anything that would break his fast].”

The two dawns have also been described in astronomical terms by certain learned scholars, endowed by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) with knowledge of the cosmos. These are the definitions they provide:

1. The first dawn [*al-fajr al-awwal*]. This is the manifestation of the dominant force [*sultān*] controlling the rays of the sun. When the sun appears from behind the fifth earth, that force allows its light to gleam in the middle of the sky—until it cuts it off—for the brief duration of the first dawn. That gleam of light, which becomes visible in the sky in the final third of the night, is the first dawn. Then the darkness of the night returns, just as it was before, because the sun sinks into the lowest inclining orbit, where it is screened by the sixth earth, with the result that the gleam of light disappears from the sky.

2. The second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*]. This is the breaking of the sun’s glow [*shafaq*], which is the manifestation of its whiteness with an underlying redness. This is its second reddish glow, and the first real display of its power at the end of the night. It is followed by the rising of the sun’s disk, which means that the sun has become visible over the surface of the earth of this world—the seventh earth, in other words—and that its rays have burst forth from the lowest celestial sphere. (The lowest sphere is the fringe of the sky.) Its eye had been concealed by the mountains, the oceans, and the regions of high elevation, but now its rays are clearly visible, as they spread out toward the middle of the sky, extending horizontally [*mustaṭīran*] as well as vertically.

The first dawn is described as extending vertically [*mustaṭīlan*], because it makes only a vertical appearance in the sky, then disappears from view. The second dawn is different, in that it appears across a broad front, embracing the whole horizon and all the regions of the sky. (The sun has two reddish glows [*shafaqatān*] at the time of its setting, as well as two reddish glows at the time of its rising.)

6.
Concerning the time prescribed
for the performance of the midday prayer
[*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*].
On how to determine whether the sun has begun
its decline [*ẓawāl*], and on how to measure the
shadows caused by the sun.

The correct timing [*waqt*] of the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*]:

As for the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*], the first moment of the time prescribed for its performance is when the sun has begun to decline from the meridian. The last moment is reached when the length of every shadow has become equal to the height of the corresponding object.

The most meritorious approach is to perform the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*] without delay, except in conditions of extremely intense heat, and only if the sky is overcast, in the case of a worshipper who intends to go out and join the congregation. This qualification is based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Put off the midday prayer until the atmosphere gets cooler [*abridū bi' ẓ-ẓuhr*], for extremely intense heat is caused by the festering pus of Hell [*qaiḥ Jahannam*].

Bilāl¹⁵⁸ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “I gave Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) the call [*adhān*]¹⁵⁹ to the midday prayer, but he said: ‘Wait till it gets a bit cooler [*abrid*]!’ Then I gave him the call a second time, and again he said: ‘Wait till it gets a bit cooler!’ Then I gave him the call a third time, and this time he said: ‘Wait till it gets a bit cooler—till you can see the

¹⁵⁸ Bilāl al-Ḥabashī, an Abyssinian slave who had been ransomed by Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), was the first muezzin [*mu’ adhdhin*] appointed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to summon the Muslim community to the five daily prayers.

¹⁵⁹ For the words of the call to prayer [*adhān*], see note 303 on p. 225 below.

afternoon shadow of the hills.’ Then he went on to say: ‘Extremely intense heat is caused by the festering pus of Hell [*qaiḥ Jahannam*], so whenever the heat becomes insufferably intense, you should all wait until the atmosphere gets cooler [before performing the midday prayer].’”

How to determine whether the sun has begun its decline from the meridian [*zawāl*]:

When the sun has reached the point where it comes to a momentary standstill,¹⁶⁰ we know that its decline is about to begin. As soon as it has in fact declined from the meridian, however slightly, the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-zuhr*] has arrived.

According to the Prophetic tradition [*ḥadīth*]:¹⁶¹

When the sun has declined by the width of the strap of a sandal [*shirāk*], that is the beginning of the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-zuhr*]. Then, when the length of every shadow has become equal to the height of the corresponding object, it is the end of the time prescribed for the midday prayer, and the beginning of the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-‘aṣr*].

How to measure the length of the shadow caused by the sun:

If you wish to determine these moments exactly, you need to measure the length of the shadow caused by the sun. In order to make the necessary measurements, you should set up some kind of pillar or pole on a piece of open ground, making sure that it is perfectly straight and upright. Then you must draw a line to mark the point where the shadow ends. Then you must watch to see whether the shadow is getting shorter or longer. If you notice that it is getting shorter, you will realize that the sun is not yet in decline. If you notice that it is steady, neither extending itself nor shrinking, the reason can only be that the sun has reached its point of momentary standstill, exactly at the meridian. It is not

¹⁶⁰ This is a reference to the fact that the sun comes to a halt, when it reaches the center of the sky, and interrupts its progress for a brief moment. As Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 3, pp. 72–73:

The expression *ṣāma ‘n-nahār* [lit., the daytime has kept fast] may be used at the point of midday in summer, when the sun is at its height, and the shade has almost disappeared. In the words of the anonymous poet:

Until, when the day keeps fast [*ṣāma ‘n-nahār*], having reached the point of noon,
and gossamer threads [*lu‘āb*] appear to fall, in the light of the summer sun....

¹⁶¹ The use of this expression may suggest that the following statement (in the text above) is a paraphrase of the actual words attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in the tradition [*ḥadīth*] quoted earlier. (See p. 114 above.)

permissible to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] at that point in time.

As soon as the shadow starts to grow longer, that is a sure indication of the sun's decline [*zawāl*]. You must therefore measure the increase, and compare it with the height of the object you are using as your standard. When the increase in the length of the shadow coincides exactly with the height of the standard, that is the end of the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt aḡ-zuhr*]. The slightest additional increase will mark the advent of the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿaṣr*]. This period will last until the shadow has lengthened by another distance equal to the height of the standard, at which point the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿaṣr*] will have come to its end. The remainder of the afternoon, until just before the setting of the sun, is called the time of dire necessity [*waqt aḡ-darūra*].¹⁶²

Instead of using a pillar or post, you may use your own stature as your standard of measurement. You will have to mark the spot where your own shadow falls, then, if you see that it is getting shorter, you will know that the sun has not yet begun to decline. If you notice that the shadow is holding steady, will realize that the sun is poised at the meridian. If it starts to grow longer, the decline [*zawāl*] must be under way, [so you will realize that the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt aḡ-zuhr*] has arrived].

When it comes to reckoning whether the length of your shadow is equal to your own stature and height, you need to know that your height is seven times the length of your own foot, not counting the length of the foot you are standing on. You should stand with your face toward the sun, then instruct some other person to mark the farthest point of your shadow with an unmistakable sign. Then you must measure the distance from your heel to that sign. If the distance between the two points is less than seven feet, apart from any shadow already caused by the sun at the moment of its decline, you will know for sure that you are within the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt aḡ-zuhr*], and that the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿaṣr*] has not yet arrived. But if the shadow has lengthened by more than seven feet, you will recognize the advent of the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿaṣr*].

¹⁶² In other words, it is a period during which the prayer may still be performed, but only as a last resort, provided that the worshipper can plead the excuse of dire necessity. As the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) explains on p. 139 below, in connection with the time prescribed for the late evening prayer [*waqt al-ʿishāʾ al-ākhirā*], the period of true merit [*waqt al-faḍīla*] is followed by a similar period of excuse and dire necessity [*waqt al-ʿudhr wa ʿd-darūra*].

7.
Concerning the differing lengths
of the shadows caused by the sun in winter
and summer, and in various regions of the world.

In connection with our foregoing discussion, concerning the measurement of shadows by feet, and the setting up of pillars or posts, it is important to note the differing conditions that prevail in winter and in summer. Depending on the season, the shadow caused by the sun will be longer or shorter from one month to the next.

The progressive increase in shadow length takes place in the winter season, because the sun is then in a position diametrically opposite to the object that casts a shadow, since its progress is confined to the fringe of the sky, and it does not ascend into the upper reaches of the atmosphere.

The progressive decrease in shadow length takes place in the summer season, because it is then that the sun rises high into the atmosphere, to shine on terrestrial objects from an overhead position.

During the first phase of its ascent, the sun is rising from the edge of the sky, so it causes a lengthy shadow to be cast by any object facing its emerging disk. The higher it rises, the shorter the shadow becomes, until the sun reaches the end of its ascending journey, at which point it comes to a momentary halt in the middle of the sky, at the meridian or zenith [*kabid as-samā'*]. Then the sun takes off on its "cruise [*sayarān*]," its descending journey toward its eventual setting in the west [*maghrib*], and the shadow immediately starts to grow longer, for this is the point of decline from the meridian [*zawāl*].

Just as it differs from season to season, so does the length of shadow vary from country to country and from town to town. In those areas that are situated directly beneath the center of the celestial sphere [*wasat al-falak*], like Mecca and its surrounding districts, any shadow caused by the sun is very slight indeed, to the point where the sun has no shadow

at all. On the other hand, in regions that are remote from the center of the celestial sphere, like Khurāsān and its neighboring districts, the sun produces a very lengthy shadow in summer and winter alike.¹⁶³ As far as length of shadow is concerned, summer in such areas is just like winter elsewhere. Even in summer, at the point when the sun declines from the meridian, they may already have as much as one whole foot of shadow.



¹⁶³ The province of Khurāsān, on the borders of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia, must have seemed very remote and strange—almost “out of this world”—to the medieval inhabitants of Mecca or Baghdād.

8.

Concerning the length of the shadow, measured in feet, that is already cast, in each month of the solar year, at the point when the sun declines from the meridian.

According to the ancient scholars in this field of science, the minimum length of the shadow already cast, at the moment when the sun declines from the meridian, is two feet. That is at the summer solstice in the solar month of June [*Ḥazīrān*].

The maximum length of the shadow already cast, at the moment of the sun's decline, is eight feet. That is at the winter solstice in the solar month of December [*Kānūn al-Awwal*].

From September to September, the meridian shadow lengths are as follows:

- In September [*Aylūl*]: five feet.
- In October [*Tishrīn al-Awwal*]: six feet.
- In November [*Tishrīn al-Ākhir*]: seven feet.
- In December [*Kānūn al-Awwal*]: eight feet.

This brings us to the winter solstice, the point where the daytime is at its shortest, and the night at its longest.¹⁶⁴ An eight-foot shadow—the maximum for the entire year—is already cast at the moment when the sun declines from the meridian. Henceforth, the shadow decreases and the daytime increases. Thus:

- In January [*Kānūn al-Ākhir*]: seven feet.
- In February [*Shubāt*]: six feet.
- In March [*Ādhār*]: five feet.

This brings us to the vernal equinox, when the day and the night are exactly equal in duration.¹⁶⁵ Then:

¹⁶⁴ According to modern works of reference, the winter solstice (in the northern hemisphere) occurs around December 22.

¹⁶⁵ According to modern works of reference, the vernal equinox (in the northern hemisphere) occurs on March 20 or 21.

- In April [*Nīsān*]: four feet.
- In May [*Ayyār*]: three feet.
- In June [*Ḥazīrān*]: two feet.

This brings us to the summer solstice, the point where the daytime is at its longest, and the night at its shortest.¹⁶⁶ A two-foot shadow—the minimum for the entire year—is already cast at the moment when the sun declines from the meridian. The daytime lasts for fifteen hours, while the night lasts for nine hours. Then:

- In July [*Tammūz*]: three feet.
- In August [*Āb*]: four feet.
- In September [*Aylūl*]: five feet.

This bring us to the autumnal equinox, when the night and the day are exactly equal in duration.¹⁶⁷

Sufyān ath-Thawrī¹⁶⁸ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

“The maximum length of the shadow already cast, at the point when the sun declines from the meridian, is seven feet.”

According to a traditional report, it was ‘Abdu’llāh ibn Mas‘ūd¹⁶⁹ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

“In the summer season, our performance of the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*], in the company of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), would take place when the shadow was from three feet to five feet in length. In the winter season, it would take place when the shadow was from five feet to six feet in length.”



¹⁶⁶ According to modern works of reference, the summer solstice (in the northern hemisphere) occurs around June 22.

¹⁶⁷ According to modern works of reference, the autumnal equinox (in the northern hemisphere) occurs on September 22 or 23.

¹⁶⁸ Abū ‘Abdi’llāh Sufyān ibn Sa‘īd ath-Thawrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was born in Kūfa in A.H. 97/715 C.E. He founded a school of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*] which survived for about two centuries after his death in Baṣra in A.H. 161/778 C.E.

¹⁶⁹ Abū ‘Abd ar-Rahmān ‘Abdu’llāh ibn Mas‘ūd al-Hudhalī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was one of the earliest and closest Companions of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). A man of lowly antecedents, he became an authority on the recitation and interpretation of the Qur’ān, and an expert on Islamic law and the Prophetic tradition. He died in A.H. 32 or 33.

9.
Concerning a somewhat different view
of this matter, adopted by certain
experts in astronomy.

Certain experts in astronomy have stated these facts and figures in somewhat different terms, as follows:

On the nineteenth day of March [*Ādhār*], the sun declines from the meridian when the shadow cast by a human being is three feet in length.¹⁷⁰ The same principle applies to any object a person may set up for the purpose of measurement, so that, at the moment when the sun declines on that day, the length of the shadow cast by the object will be equal to three sevenths of its height.

The length of the shadow will thenceforth decrease, at the rate of one foot for every thirty-six days that pass, until the summer solstice is reached on the nineteenth of June [*Ḥazīrān*],¹⁷¹ at which point the daytime is at its longest, and the night at its shortest. On that day, the sun will decline from the meridian when the shadow cast by a human being is one half of a foot in length.

From that point on, the length of the shadow will increase, at the rate of one foot for every thirty-six days that pass, until the autumnal equinox is reached on the nineteenth day of September [*Aylūl*].¹⁷² On that day, the sun will decline from the meridian when the shadow cast by a human being is three feet in length.

The length of the shadow will then continue to increase, but now at the rate of one foot for every fourteen days, until the winter solstice is reached on the nineteenth day of December [*Kānūn al-Awwal*],¹⁷³ at which point the night is at its longest, and the daytime at its shortest.

¹⁷⁰ That is to say, three times the length of the actual foot of the individual concerned. (See p. 123 above.)

¹⁷¹ See note 166 on p. 127 above.

¹⁷² See note 167 on p. 127 above.

¹⁷³ See note 164 on p. 126 above.

On that day, the sun will decline from the meridian when the shadow cast by a human being is seven and a half feet in length. This is the maximum length attained by the meridian shadow.

Thenceforth, with every fourteen days that pass, the length of the shadow will decrease by one foot, until the vernal equinox is reached on the nineteenth day of March [*Ādhār*].¹⁷⁴ On that day, the sun will decline from the meridian when the shadow cast by a human being is three feet in length.¹⁷⁵ This point marks the sun's entry into the spring season.

As we have mentioned above, the rate of increase or decrease in the length of the shadow is one foot for every thirty-six days in the seasons of spring and summer, and one foot for every fourteen days in the seasons of autumn and winter.



¹⁷⁴ See note 165 on p. 126 above.

¹⁷⁵ That is to say, three times the length of the actual foot of the individual concerned. (See p. 123 above.)

10.
Concerning yet another view of this matter,
suggested by one of our own Shaikhs.

The following tabulation represents the view of this matter preferred by one of our own Shaikhs. For each of the solar months, he lists the length of the shadow cast by a human being: (a) at the beginning of the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-ẓuhr*], and (b) at the beginning of the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-‘aṣr*]. The length of the shadow is measured in feet, on the understanding that one foot is equal to one seventh of [the height of] any given individual, standing in an upright posture. It should also be noted that, in each case, the figures apply to the whole of the month concerned.

<u>Month:</u>	<u>Midday</u>	<u>Afternoon</u>
June [<i>Ḥaḡīrān</i>]:	3 ft.	9 ft.
July [<i>Tammūz</i>]:	4 ft.	8 ft.
August [<i>Āb</i>]:	5 ft.	10 ft.
September [<i>Aylūl</i>]:	6 ft.	12 ft.
October [<i>Tishrīn al-Awwal</i>]:	7 ft.	13 ft.
November [<i>Tishrīn al-Ākhir</i>]:	8 ft.	14 ft.
December [<i>Kānūn al-Awwal</i>]:	10 ft.	17 ft.
January [<i>Kānūn ath-Thānī</i>]: ¹⁷⁶	9 ft.	15 ft.
February [<i>Shubāṭ</i>]:	7 ft.	14 ft.
March [<i>Ādhār</i>]:	6 ft.	12 ft.
April [<i>Nīsān</i>]:	4 ft.	11 ft.
May [<i>Ayyār</i>]:	3 ft.	10 ft.

¹⁷⁶ *Kānūn ath-Thānī* [January] is also known as *Kānūn al-Ākhir*.

These figures represent the distances by which the sun declines from the meridian during each of the months of the year. Allāh knows best, of course, for His knowledge goes beyond the reach of our perception, and transcends the limited scope of our sciences.



11.

Concerning the permissibility of using less objective methods in order to ascertain whether the sun has declined from the meridian.

In order to determine the moment of the sun's decline from the meridian [*zawāl*], it is by no means absolutely necessary to apply the methods and definitive calculations described above. They represent only one of several valid approaches to ascertaining the point of decline, and not everyone is in a position to adopt that particular approach. The crux of the matter is simply this: Whenever someone is reasonably persuaded and convinced of the sun's decline from the meridian [*ghalaba 'alā zanni-hi wa yaqīn-hi zawālu 'sh-shams*], it is incumbent upon that person to perform the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*].

In relation to the prescribed times [*awqāt*], people fall into three distinct categories:

a. Those for whom certainty is a strict obligation [*farḍu-hu 'l-yaqīn*]. If a person belongs within this category, it means that he is familiar with the minutes and the hours, and with the movement of the stars. With this knowledge at his disposal, he is able to determine the exact time with certainty.

b. Those for whom it is a strict obligation either to exercise their independent judgment [*ijtihād*],¹⁷⁷ by making the necessary calculations on the basis of their own practical experience, or to follow the example [*taqlīd*] set by someone who makes the required effort.

Included in this category are craftsmen who lack objective knowledge of the times of day. If they are to exercise their independent judgment, they must therefore base their calculations on the experience obtained in the practice of their craft. For example, a baker will know from

¹⁷⁷ As a technical term of Islāmic jurisprudence, *ijtihād* means the effort made by a qualified expert to reach an independent judgment on a point of law, through the interpretation and application of the four basic sources or principles [*uṣūl*], namely the Qur'ān, the Sunna, the consensus [*ijmā'*] of the recognized authorities, and deduction by analogy [*qiyās*]. A person qualified to exercise *ijtihād* is called a *mujtahid*.

experience that he normally bakes two or three batches of kneaded dough in the time before noon; or a miller will know that it usually takes him till around noon to grind a bushel [*qafīz*] of grain. He will therefore take advantage of the break before his next round of work, and duly perform the ritual prayer.

Just as it is hard for anyone to ascertain the time on a day when the sky is overcast, due to the sun's invisibility, there may be special circumstances in which a person is prevented from watching the time, or is too busily preoccupied to do so.

People in this category may sometimes have another option, namely, to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] in response to the call to prayer [*adhān*], provided that the call is given by someone who has expert knowledge of the prescribed times, or at least by someone who would not give the call without the permission of such an expert.

c. Those for whom it is a strict obligation to consult their intuitive sense of what is right and proper [*at-taḥarrī*], and to delay their performance of the prayer until they feel reasonably sure that the prescribed time has indeed arrived. This applies to anyone who finds himself in an underground situation, and to all those who are confined or imprisoned in places where it is impossible to ascertain the time, whether by external indication, reported information, or the sound of the call to prayer [*adhān*].¹⁷⁸

To establish the guiding principle in all of this, let us quote the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Whenever I give you an order, you must carry it out to the best of your ability.



¹⁷⁸ See note 303 on p. 225 below.

12.

Concerning the subtle and difficult nature of the task of ascertaining the precise moment of the sun's decline from the meridian [*ma'rifat az-zawāl bi't-tahqīq*].

It is indeed a subtle and difficult task, to ascertain with precision the moment of the sun's decline from the meridian [*ma'rifat az-zawāl bi't-tahqīq*]. This is clearly conveyed to us in the tradition [*ḥadīth*], according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once asked Gabriel (peace be upon him): "Has the sun declined from the meridian?" He received the answer: "No..., yes," so he said: "How can that be?" and Gabriel (peace be upon him) explained: "In the time it took for me to say to you: 'No..., yes,' the sun covered a distance of fifty thousand leagues [*farsakh*]¹⁷⁹ in its orbit across the celestial sphere."

It would seem that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was asking Gabriel (peace be upon him) about the sun's decline [*zawāl*] with respect to the knowledge [*'ilm*] of Allāh (Exalted is He). For your own practical purposes, however, you will find the following guidelines sufficient:

If you are facing the *Qibla* [the direction of the Ka'ba],¹⁸⁰ on a day in the summer season, and the sun is over your right eyebrow, it has already declined from the meridian, without a doubt. You should therefore perform the midday prayer [*fa-ṣalli 'ḏ-ḏuhr*].

If the shadow cast by every object has reached the point where it is equal in length to the height of the corresponding object, you know for sure that the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-ʿaṣr*] has arrived.

¹⁷⁹ According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the *farsakh* [parasang, or league] is three miles of the Hāshimī measure, i.e. thirty bow-shots reckoning the bow-shot as four hundred cubits, or sixty bow-shots reckoning the bow shot as two hundred cubits. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *F-R-S-KH*.)

¹⁸⁰ See note 152 on p. 118 above.

If the sun is over your left eyebrow, again in the summer season, while you are facing the *Qibla*, you must be aware that the sun has not yet declined from the meridian.

If the sun is directly between your eyes, it has reached the point where it comes to a momentary halt in the middle of the sky, at the meridian or zenith [*kabid as-samā'*]. It may actually have begun its decline, if this happens at the beginning of the winter season, when the daytime is growing shorter.

If the winter season has begun, and the sun is over your right eyebrow, it has definitely declined from the meridian. This is true at all times of the year, because, when this happens in the summer season, it marks the beginning of the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-ẓuhr*], and if it happens in the winter season, it marks the end of the time prescribed for the midday prayer.

If the sun is over your left eyebrow, this may also mean that it has already declined from the meridian, on account of the shortening of the daytime in the winter season. It is not possible at the beginning of the summer season, however, on account of the extension that then occurs in the length of the daytime.

If the sun is directly between your eyes, in the winter season, it must have declined from the meridian, without a doubt.

If the sun has moved over to the point where it appears above your right eyebrow, again in the winter season, this marks the end of the time prescribed for the midday prayer [*waqt az-ẓuhr*].

All of the foregoing information is relevant to the inhabitants of the geographical zone of 'Irāq and Khurāsān,¹⁸¹ who perform their prayers while facing the Ka'ba in the direction of the Black Corner [*ar-Rukn al-Aswad*]¹⁸² and the door of the House [of Allāh]. As for the people of Yemen [*al-Yaman*] and the West [*al-Maghrib*], and those who inhabit the neighboring regions, the opposite holds true in their case, since they perform their prayers while facing toward the Yamānī Corner [*ar-Rukn al-Yamānī*] and the rear part of the Ka'ba. The calculations must differ accordingly.

¹⁸¹ See note 163 on p. 125 above.

¹⁸² The Black Corner [*ar-Rukn al-Aswad*], which is sometimes called the Corner of the House [*Rukn al-Bait*], is the angle of the Ka'ba in which the Black Stone [*ar-Hajar al-Aswad*] is lodged.

13.
On how to identify the *Qibla*, once you have
ascertained the sun's decline from the meridian
[*zawāl*].

Once you have ascertained the sun's decline from the meridian [*zawāl*], and wish to identify the *Qibla*¹⁸³ [direction of the Ka'ba], you must cast your shadow to your left, for then you will be facing toward the *Qibla*.

You will be relieved to know that this can be summed up so neatly, and that it can be learned without laborious effort. If I went on at such great length, in discussing the ascertainment of the sun's decline from the meridian [*zawāl*], I only did so because it happens to be the most difficult and the most subtle of all the times prescribed for ritual prayer [*awqāt*].

As for measuring the length of shadow in feet, this practice goes back to the time of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), as we know from the traditional report [*khābar*]¹⁸⁴ of Ibn Mas'ūd¹⁸⁵ (may Allāh be well pleased with him). We may conclude that the subject has received a sufficiently thorough explanation in the preceding pages, though we must acknowledge that Allāh knows best.



¹⁸³ See note 152 on p. 118 above.

¹⁸⁴ See note 142 on p. 112 above.

¹⁸⁵ See note 169 on p. 127 above.

14.
Concerning the time prescribed
for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-‘aṣr*].

As for the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-‘aṣr*], it begins, as we have mentioned above, as soon as there is the slightest increase in the length of shadow, beyond the point where the shadow is equal in length to the height of the person or object by which it is cast. The end of its prescribed time is reached when the shadow has come to be twice as long as the corresponding object. As we have also mentioned above, the remainder of the afternoon, until just before the setting of the sun, is called the time of dire necessity [*waqt aḍ-ḍarūra*].¹⁸⁶

The most meritorious approach is to perform the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘aṣr*] with the least possible delay.



¹⁸⁶ See note 162 on p. 123 above.

15.
Concerning the time prescribed
for the sunset prayer [*waqt al-maghrib*].

As far the sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*] is concerned, once the sun has set [*gharabat ash-shams*], that is to say, as soon the tip of the sun's eyebrow has sunk out of sight, its prescribed time has arrived.

It actually has two prescribed times, of course, [to mark both the beginning and the end of the period allowed for its performance]. One of these is the setting [*ghurūb*] of the sun, and the other is the final disappearance of the sun's afterglow [*shafaq*]. The latter refers to the lingering redness [*humra*] in the western sky, according to the more authentic of the two traditionally reported doctrines [*aṣaḥḥ ar-riwāyatain*].



16.

Concerning the time prescribed for the late evening prayer [*waqt al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*].

As soon as the sun’s final reddish afterglow [*shafaq*] has disappeared completely, the beginning of the time prescribed for the late evening prayer [*waqt al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*] has definitely arrived. Within the whole of the time allowed for its performance, the period of true merit [*waqt al-ḥaḍra*] lasts until one third of the night has elapsed, according to one of the two traditionally reported doctrines on the subject. According to the other version, it lasts until halfway through the night [*nisf al-lail*]. The period of true merit [*waqt al-ḥaḍra*] is then followed by the period of excuse and dire necessity [*waqt al-‘udhr wa ‘ḍ-ḍarūra*],¹⁸⁷ which remains in effect as long as the second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*]¹⁸⁸ has not yet risen into view.

The time prescribed for this prayer has two Arabic names, one of them being *‘atama* [the first third of the night, after the disappearance of the sun’s reddish afterglow], while the other is *al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā* [the late evening]. We know this because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The Arabs of the desert [*al-A‘rāb*] have gained the upperhand over you, as far as the name of this particular prayer [*ṣalāt*] of yours is concerned, since *‘atama* is what they call it.

In other words, its proper name was *al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*, but the Arabs of the desert insisted on calling it *‘atama*, so the townspeople came into line with them in this respect.

The most meritorious approach is to delay its performance until toward the latter part of its prescribed time, which may mean either the

¹⁸⁷ That is to say, the period of true merit [*waqt al-ḥaḍra*] is followed by an additional period, during which the prayer may still be performed, as a last resort, provided that the worshipper can plead the excuse of dire necessity. (For a similar period of dire necessity [*waqt al-‘udhr wa ‘ḍ-ḍarūra*], following the time prescribed for the afternoon prayer [*waqt al-‘aṣr*], see p. 137 above.)

¹⁸⁸ For precise definitions of the second dawn [*al-fajr ath-thānī*], which is also known as the true dawn [*al-fajr aṣ-ṣādiq*], see p. 118 above.

end of the first third of the night, or the end of the first half of the night, as we have explained above.

To be even more precise, the best time to perform this prayer is when the western twilight [*al-bayāḍ al-gharbī*] has entirely disappeared, and pitch blackness has taken its place. (The technical term for the final glimmer of twilight is “the second reddish afterglow [*ash-shafaq ath-thānī*].”) In order to meet this requirement, the prayer may have to be postponed until one fourth of the night has elapsed, or one third, or one half.

All of this hinges on one important condition, namely, that the worshipper [*muṣallī*] must not go to sleep before performing the prayer, for it is considered reprehensible to let sleep intervene as the cause of its postponement. So, if the worshipper has reason to fear the irresistible onset of slumber, his best course is to perform the prayer at once, and then go off to sleep. This explains why, according to the doctrine of Imām al-Shāfi‘ī¹⁹⁰ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), it is preferable to perform the [late evening] prayer at the beginning of its prescribed time. When we [of the Ḥanbalī school] maintain that the most meritorious approach is to delay its performance, we do so because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Perform the late prayer late [*a‘ timū bi’l-‘atama*]!

We also know that he went out one night [to perform the prayer in the mosque], when it was very late and totally dark [*qad a‘ tama*], and that he then said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

If it had not meant imposing undue hardship upon my Community, I would have commanded them to perform it [as I have just done].

It is clear, therefore, that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) not only delayed his own performance of this prayer, but also encouraged others to postpone their performance of it.

¹⁹⁰ Imām Abū ‘Abdi’llāh Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfi‘ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools [*madhāhib*] of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 204/820 C.E. Imām al-Ghazālī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was one of the most notable professors of the Shāfi‘ī school.

17.

Concerning the established customary observances [*as-sunan ar-rātiba*] that are regularly performed in conjunction with these five daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*].

As for the established customary observances [*as-sunan ar-rātiba*] that are regularly performed in conjunction with these five obligatory daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*], they consist of thirteen cycles [*rakʿa*] of ritual prayer, distributed as follows:

- a. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed before the obligatory dawn prayer [*rakʿatān qabla ʿl-fajr*].¹⁹¹
- b. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed before the obligatory midday prayer [*rakʿatān qabla ʿz-zuhr*].¹⁹²
- c. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed after the obligatory midday prayer [*rakʿatān baʿda ʿz-zuhr*].
- d. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed after the obligatory sunset prayer [*rakʿatān baʿda ʿl-maghrib*].¹⁹³
- e. Two cycles of voluntary ritual prayer performed after the obligatory late evening prayer [*rakʿatān baʿda ʿl-ʿishāʿ al-ākhirā*].¹⁹⁴
- f. Three cycles of the odd-numbered ritual prayer called *witr*.¹⁹⁵ In performing this voluntary prayer, the worshipper has two options: If he so wishes, he may perform it with a single salutation [*taslīma*]¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ For a detailed account of the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*], the first of the five obligatory daily prayers (which is also known as *ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ* [the prayer of daybreak]), see pp. 110 and 118–20 above.

¹⁹² For a detailed account of the midday prayer [*ṣalāt az-zuhr*], the second of the five obligatory daily prayers, see pp. 110 and 118–20 above.

¹⁹³ For a detailed account of the sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*], the fourth of the five obligatory daily prayers, see pp. 110 and 118–20 above.

¹⁹⁴ For a detailed account of the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿishāʿ al-ākhirā*], the last of the five obligatory daily prayers (which is also known as *ṣalāt al-ʿatama* [the prayer of the first third of the night, after the disappearance of the sun’s reddish afterglow]), see pp. 110 and 118–20 above.

¹⁹⁵ See note 50 on p. 42 above.

¹⁹⁶ The term *taslīma* [salutation] is applied to the act of turning the head to the right and saying: “*as-salāmu ʿalaikum wa raḥmatu ʿllāh* [Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh],” then turning the head to the left and repeating these same words.

[at the end of the third cycle], as in the case of the sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*]. If he prefers, he may split it into two parts, making one salutation [*taslīma*] after two cycles, and another after the single cycle that concludes the *witr*. There is greater merit in choosing the second of these two options.

In the first of the three [cycles of the *witr* prayer], the worshipper should follow his recitation of the Opening Sūra of the Qurʾān [*al-Fātiḥa*]¹⁹⁷ with the Sūra of the Most High [*Sūrat al-Aʿlā*], which reads:

Glorify the Name of your Lord the Most High who created, and then shaped, and who determined, then guided; and who brought forth the pasturage, then turned it into rust-colored stubble.	<i>sabbihi ʿsma</i> <i>Rabbi-ka ʿl-Aʿlā</i> <i>alladhī khalqa fa-sawwā</i> <i>wa ʿlladhī qaddara fa-hadā</i> <i>wa ʿlladhī akhrajā ʿl-marʿā</i> <i>fa-jaʿala-hu</i> <i>ghuthāʿ an aḥwā.</i>
We shall make you recite [O Muḥammad] so that you shall not forget save that which Allāh wills. He surely knows what is spoken aloud and that which is kept hidden; and We shall ease your way unto the state of ease.	<i>sa-nuqriʿu-ka</i> <i>fa-lā tansā</i> <i>illā mā shāʿa ʿllāh:</i> <i>inna-hu yaʿlamu ʿl-jahra</i> <i>wa mā yakhfā</i> <i>wa nu-yassiru-ka</i> <i>liʿl-yusrā.</i>
Therefore remind, in case the reminder brings some benefit. He who fears will remember, but the most wretched will flout it, he who will roast in the Great Fire, in which he then will neither die nor live.	<i>fa-dhakkir</i> <i>in nafaʿati ʿdh-</i> <i>dhikrā</i> <i>sa-yadhdhakkaru man yakhshā</i> <i>wa yatajannabu ʿl-ashqā</i> <i>alladhī yaṣṣa ʿn-nāra ʿl-kubrā</i> <i>thumma lā yamūtu</i> <i>fi-hā wa lā yahyā.</i>
Successful is he who purifies himself, and remembers the Name of his Lord, and then performs the prayer. But you prefer the life of this lower world, although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.	<i>qad aflaḥa man tazakkā</i> <i>wa dhakara ʿsma</i> <i>Rabbi-hi.</i> <i>fa-ṣallā</i> <i>bal tu ʿthirūna ʿl-ḥayāta ʿd-</i> <i>dunyā</i> <i>wa ʿl-ākhiratu khayrun</i> <i>wa abqā.</i>
Surely this is in the ancient scrolls: the scrolls of Abraham and Moses. (87:1–19)	<i>inna ḥādḥā la-fi ʿṣ-Ṣuḥufi ʿl-ūlā</i> <i>Ṣuḥufi Ibrāhīma wa Mūsā.</i>

¹⁹⁷ The recitation of the Opening Sūra of the Qurʾān [*al-Fātiḥa*] is an essential element [*rukn*] in every performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], which is rendered null and void by its omission.

In the second [cycle of the *witr* prayer], after *al-Fātiḥa*, he should recite the Sūra called “the Unbelievers” [*Sūrat al-Kāfirūn*], which reads:

Say: “O unbelievers,	<i>qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn</i>
I do not worship what you worship,	<i>lā a'budu mā ta'budūn</i>
and you are not worshipping	<i>wa lā antum 'ābidūna</i>
that which I worship;	<i>mā a'bud</i>
nor shall I worship	<i>wa lā ana 'ābidun</i>
what you have worshipped,	<i>mā 'abadtum</i>
neither will you worship	<i>wa lā antum 'ābidūna</i>
that which I worship.	<i>mā a'bud</i>
To you your religion,	<i>la-kum dīnu-kum</i>
and to me my religion!” (109:1–6)	<i>wa liya dīn.</i>

In the third [cycle of the *witr* prayer], again after *al-Fātiḥa*, he should recite the Sūra of Sincere Devotion [*Sūrat al-Ikhlās*], which reads:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!	<i>qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad</i>
Allāh, the Everlasting Refuge!	<i>Allāhu 'ṣ-Ṣamad</i>
He does not beget,	<i>lam yalid</i>
nor was He begotten;	<i>wa lam yūlad</i>
and there is none	<i>wa lam yakun la-hu</i>
comparable unto Him.” (112:1–4)	<i>kufuwān aḥad.</i>

In the first of the two cycles of the customary dawn prayer [*sunnat al-fajr*], after *al-Fātiḥa*, the worshipper should recite the Sūra called “the Unbelievers” [*Sūrat al-Kāfirūn*], then, in the second cycle, again after *al-Fātiḥa*, he should recite the Sūra of Sincere Devotion [*Sūrat al-Ikhlās*]. The worshipper is recommended to perform these two cycles of voluntary prayer in his private residence, and only then to go out [to join the congregation in the mosque]. He is also recommended to devote himself to the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He), and to refrain from any conversation that is not absolutely necessary, from the time of completing the two voluntary cycles until the moment when he embarks upon the performance of the prayer that is strictly obligatory [*farīda*].

In the two cycles [of customary prayer] after the obligatory sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*], the Qur'ānic recitation should be the same as in the two cycles preceding the obligatory dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*].

Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

“On more than twenty occasions, I heard Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) reciting:

‘Say: “O unbelievers....”’	<i>qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn...</i>
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—and:

‘Say: “He is Allāh, One!...”

qul Huwa ’llāhu Aḥad...

—in the course of performing the two [cycles of customary prayer] after the obligatory sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*].”

In the case of Ṭāwūs (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), we know from a traditional report that he used to recite, in the first of the two cycles:

The Messenger believes in that
which has been sent down to him
from his Lord,
and so do the believers.

*āmana ’r-Rasūlu
bi-mā unzila
ilai-hi
wa ’l-mu’minūn:*

Each one believes in Allāh
and His angels
and His Books and His Messengers—
we make no distinction between any
of His Messengers—and they say:
“We hear, and we obey.”

*kullun āmana bi’llāhi
wa malā’ikati-hi
wa kutubi-hi wa rusulih:
lā nufarriqu baina aḥadin
min rusulih: wa qālū:
sami’ nā wa aṭa’ nā.*

Grant us Your forgiveness, our Lord;
and unto You
is the homeward journey.

*ghufrāna-ka Rabba-nā
wa ilai-ka ’l-
maṣīr—*

Allāh does not charge any soul
except to the extent of its capacity.
To its credit
is that which it has earned, and
to its debit is what it has deserved.

*lā yukallifu ’llāhu nafsan
illā wus’ a-hā:
la-hā
mā kasabat wa ’alai-hā
ma ’ktasabat:*

Our Lord, do not take us to task
if we forget, or miss the mark.

*Rabbanā lā tu’ akhidh-nā
in nasīnā aw akhta’ nā:*

Our Lord, do not lay upon us
such a burden
as You laid upon
those before us.

*Rabbanā wa lā taḥmil ’alai-nā
iṣran ka-mā
ḥamalta-hu ’ala ’lladhīna
min qabli-nā:*

Our Lord, do not lay upon us
more than we have
the strength to bear.

*Rabbanā wa lā tuḥammil-nā
mā lā ṭāqata
la-nā bih:*

And pardon us, and forgive us,
and have mercy on us.
You are our Protector, so help us
against the people of the unbelievers.
(2:285–6)

*wa ’ fu’ an-nā wa ’ghfir la-nā
wa ’rḥam-nā:
Anta Mawlā-nā fa-’nṣur-nā
’ala ’l-qawmi ’l-kāfirīn.*

—and in the second cycle:

Say: “He is Allāh, One!...”

qul Huwa ’llāhu Aḥad...

The worshipper is strongly recommended to perform these two cycles [of customary prayer] with the least possible delay, because, as we know from the traditional report transmitted on the authority of Ḥudhaifa (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Waste no time in performing the two [voluntary] cycles after the sunset prayer [*ar-rak'atain ba'da 'l-maghrib*], so that the angels may carry them up to heaven, together with the prescribed prayer.

For the same reason, the worshipper is recommended to keep their performance fairly short.

In another tradition [*ḥadīth*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles after the sunset prayer [*ṣallā rak'atain ba'da 'l-maghrib*], and before he has engaged in any talk, his prayer [*ṣalāt*] will be carried aloft to the uppermost heaven [*'Illiyūn*].¹⁹⁹

There is also evidence to support the view that it is commendable to prolong the performance of these two [voluntary cycles after the obligatory sunset prayer], inasmuch as Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to prolong the Qur’ānic recitation in the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer, to the point where the people in attendance at the mosque would all have dispersed to their homes.”

We have a similar account from Ḥudhaifa (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who is reported as having said:

“I once came [to the mosque] to join Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and I performed the sunset prayer [*ṣallaitu ṣalāta 'l-maghrib*] together with him. He then proceeded to perform the voluntary prayer, until the time prescribed for the obligatory late evening prayer [*al-'ishā' al-ākhirā*]. Then he left the mosque and went back to his house.”

There is also traditional evidence to suggest that the commendable course is for the worshipper to perform these two [voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer] in his private residence.

¹⁹⁹ In the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The register of the righteous is in *'Illiyūn*. Ah, what will convey to you what *'Illiyūn* is? A written record, attested to by those who are brought near [unto their Lord] (83:18–21).

For instance, ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said that [her husband] the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer [*ba’da’l-maghrib*] in his own apartment. A similar report has come down to us from Umm Ḥabība²⁰⁰ (may Allāh be well pleased with her).

Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never perform the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer [*ba’da’l-maghrib*], except in his own apartment.”

Let us give the last word on this subject to Sahl ibn Sa’d as-Sā’idī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who is reported as having said:

“By the time I had attained to manhood, I found myself living in the age of [the Caliph] ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), and I noticed that, as soon as the obligatory sunset prayer had ended with the salutation [*taslīma*],²⁰¹ there would not be one single member of the congregation performing the two—meaning the two voluntary cycles after the sunset prayer [*ar-rak’atain ba’da’l-maghrib*]—in the mosque [*masjid*]. They would all be jostling toward the door of the mosque, departing in haste to perform the customary prayer in their own homes.”



²⁰⁰ Like ‘Ā’isha, Umm Ḥabība (may Allāh be well pleased with them both) is revered as one of the “Mothers of the Believers [*Ummahāt al-Mu’minīn*],” the wives of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

²⁰¹ See note 196 on p. 141 above.

18.
Concerning the special qualities
of the five daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Salama ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān, on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If one of you had a stream flowing by his door, in which he bathed himself five times every day, do you suppose that any trace of his physical dirt would be left behind?

“No!” was the unanimous response, so he went on to say:

Well, that is just how it is in the case of the five daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*]. Allāh (Exalted is He) uses them to wipe away sins.

Abū Tha‘laba al-Quraṣī is reported as having said: “I heard [the Caliph] ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) say: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

““They [the sinners] feel the scorching heat, but then, when they perform the prayer of daybreak [*ṣallaw aṣ-ṣubḥ*], the prayer [*ṣalāt*] washes off whatever sin preceded it. Then they feel the scorching heat again, until they perform the midday prayer [*ṣallaw aṣ-ṣuḥr*], and the prayer [*ṣalāt*] washes off whatever sin preceded it. Then they feel the scorching heat yet again, until the time of the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘aṣr*] is at hand, so they perform it, and the prayer washes off whatever sin preceded it.”

“The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued in this vein, until he had mentioned each of the five daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*].”

Al-Ḥarth, the freedman [*mawlā*] of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), is reported as having said:

“On one occasion, [the Caliph] ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) had taken his seat, then called for some water and used it to perform his ritual ablution. Then he said: ‘I saw Allāh’s

Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) perform this ritual ablution of mine [*tawaddaʿa wuḍūʿī hādhā*].²⁰²

“Then he went on to say: ‘So, if anyone else performs this ritual ablution of mine, then duly proceeds to perform the midday prayer [*ṣallaʿ-ḡuḡhr*], he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt aṣ-subḡh*].

“Then, if he duly proceeds to perform the afternoon prayer [*ṣalla ʿl-ʿaṣr*], he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the midday prayer [*ṣalāt aḡ-ḡuḡhr*].

“Then, if he duly proceeds to perform the sunset prayer [*ṣalla ʿl-maḡhrib*], he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*].

“Then, if he duly proceeds to perform the late evening prayer [*ṣalla ʿl-ʿishāʿ al-ākḡhira*], he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maḡhrib*]. Then maybe he will go to bed and spend his night tossing and turning.

“Then, if he duly proceeds to perform the daybreak prayer [*ṣalla ʿṣ-subḡh*], he will be granted forgiveness for whatever sins he may have committed between that point and the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿishāʿ al-ākḡhira*]. For:

Surely the good deeds will
drive away the evil deeds.
(11:114)²⁰³

inna ʿl-ḡasanāti
yudḡhibna ʿs-sayyiʿāt.

“His listeners then said to him: ‘So, these [five daily prayers] are the “good deeds [*ḡasanāt*],” but what are the “abiding deeds of righteousness [*al-bāḡiyātu ʿṣ-ṣāliḡāt*]?”²⁰³ To this he replied: ‘They are the affirmations:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Glory be to Allāh! | <i>subḡāna ʿllāḡ!</i> |
| • Praise be to Allāh! | <i>al-ḡamḡu liʿllāḡ!</i> |
| • There is no god but Allāh! | <i>la ilāḡa illa ʿllāḡ!</i> |
| • Allāh is Supremely Great! | <i>Allāḡu Akbar!</i> |
| • There is no power,
nor is there any strength,
except through Allāh,
the All-High, the Almighty! | <i>lā ḡawla</i>
<i>wa lā quwwata</i>
<i>illā biʿllāḡi ʿl-</i>
<i>ʿAlīyyi ʿl-ʿAḡīm! ʿʿ</i> |

²⁰² The verb *tawaddaʿa* and the noun *wuḍūʿ* are both derived from the three-consonant root *w-ḡ-ḡ*. The ablution called *wuḍūʿ* is actually the minor ritual cleansing, as distinguished from *ḡuḡsl*, the major ritual cleansing, which requires the washing of the whole body.

²⁰³ Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has spoken of “the abiding deeds of righteousness [*al-bāḡiyātu ʿṣ-ṣāliḡāt*]” in Q. 18:46 and 19:76.

According to a traditional report from Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad, his father told him that his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once told him that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had said:

The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is the means of pleasing the Lord and the angels [*marḍāt ar-Rabb wa ‘l-malā’ika*]; the exemplary custom of the Prophets [*sunnat al-Anbiyā’*] (may Allāh’s blessings be upon them all); the light of spiritual experience [*ma‘rifā*] and the root of faith [*īmān*]; the response to supplication and the acceptance of good deeds; a blessing upon sustenance; the comfort of physical bodies; a weapon against hostile forces; the means of displeasing the Devil [*Shaitān*]; an intercessor between the worshipper and the Owner of the Heavens [*Mālik as-Samāwāt*]; a lamp in his tomb and a cushion beneath his side; his response to Munkar and Nakīr;²⁰⁴ and a friendly companion to visit with him in his tomb, until the Day of Resurrection [*Yaum al-Qiyāma*].

Then, when the Day of Resurrection has arrived, the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] will be a cooling shade above him, a crown upon his head, a garment upon his body, a guiding light in front of him, a screen between him and the Fire of Hell, the proof in the presence of the Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) that he is one of the true believers [*mu’minīn*], a weight in the Balance [*al-Mīzān*],²⁰⁵ a passport across the Bridge over Hell [*aṣ-Ṣirāt*],²⁰⁶ and a key to the Garden of Paradise.

This is all because the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is a glorification of the Lord [*tasbīḥ*],²⁰⁷ a declaration that all praise belongs to Him [*tahmīd*],²⁰⁸ a proclamation of His Sanctity [*taqḍīs*],²⁰⁹ an exaltation of His Might and Majesty [*ta‘ẓīm*],²¹⁰ a recitation of His Book [*qirā’a*],²¹¹ and a personal supplication [*du‘ā’*]. The most meritorious of all good deeds is surely the ritual prayer, duly performed at the time prescribed for it [*aṣ-ṣalāt li-waqtī-hā*].

²⁰⁴ Munkar and Nakīr are the two angels charged with the interrogation of the dead. Their names do not occur in the Qur’ān, but they are mentioned in a saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in which their work is described in some detail.

²⁰⁵ For a detailed account of the Balance [*Mīzān*], see Vol. 1, pp. 242–46.

²⁰⁶ For a minutely detailed description of the Bridge over Hell [*aṣ-Ṣirāt*], in a traditional account attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), see Vol. 2, p. 251.

²⁰⁷ The verbal noun *tasbīḥ* is derived from the three-consonant root *s-b-ḥ*, which occurs in the expression “*subḥāna ‘llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!”

²⁰⁸ The verbal noun *tahmīd* is derived from the three-consonant root *ḥ-m-d*, which occurs in the expression “*al-ḥamdu li’llāh* [Praise be to Allāh]!” Also derived from this root are Muḥammad and Aḥmad, the names of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), which mean “Highly Praised” and “Praiseworthy.”

²⁰⁹ The verbal noun *taqḍīs* is derived from the three-consonant root *q-d-s*, which conveys the basic idea of “holiness, sanctity.” The verb *taqaddasa* is used in the expression “*taqaddasa ‘llāh* [Sanctified is Allāh]!” This same root occurs in the words *Maqḍīs* and *Muqaddas*, which are applied to the Temple of Jerusalem.

²¹⁰ The verbal noun *ta‘ẓīm* is derived from the three-consonant root ‘-ẓ-m, which occurs in *al-‘Aẓīm* [the Almighty; the Sublime], which is one of the Most Beautiful Names of Allāh (Exalted is He).

²¹¹ The word *qirā’a* [reading; recitation] is derived from the same three-consonant root—*q-r-’*—as Qur’ān. In certain contexts, notably that of the ritual prayer, *qirā’a* means specifically “the recitation of the Qur’ān.”

Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said: “I once heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

‘The five daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*] are the supporting pillar of the true religion [*‘imād ad-dīn*]. Allāh does not accept faith [*īmān*] without the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].’”

Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

“A man once asked: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, how many ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*] has Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) enjoined upon His servants as obligatory religious duties?’ When he received the reply: ‘Five ritual prayers [*khams ṣalawāt*],’ the man went on to ask: ‘And is there anything [obligatory] before them or after them?’ So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him:

“As obligatory religious duties, Allāh has enjoined upon His servants a total of five ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt khams*]. There is nothing [obligatory] before them or after them.’

“The man then swore by Allāh that he would perform all five, neither adding to them nor subtracting from them, whereupon Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said: ‘If he is true to his oath, he will enter the Garden of Paradise!’”

Tamīm ad-Dārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

“The first item for which the servant [of the Lord] will be called to account, on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], will be his performance of the obligatory ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. If he has carried it out completely, it will be recorded as perfect in his credit column. If he has not carried it out completely, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will say to the angels: “See if you can find any voluntary observances [*taṭawwu’*] to My servant’s credit, then apply them in order to make up for what he has omitted in this area.”

Anas ibn Ḥakīm aḍ-Ḍabī’ is reported as having said: “Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: “When you get back home to your family, be sure to let them know that I heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

““The first item for which the servant [of the Lord] will be called to account, on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], will be his performance of the prescribed ritual prayer [*aṣ-ṣalāt al-maktūba*]. If he has carried it out completely,

[well and good]. If not, an investigation will be undertaken [by the angels], and if he has any voluntary observances [*taṭawwu'*] to his credit, they will be applied in order to complete his record of obligatory performance [*farīḍa*]. The same procedure will then be followed when it comes to assessing his achievements in other spheres of duty.”

Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said: “Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

“The first item for which the servant [of the Lord] will be called to account [on the Day of Resurrection] will be his performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and the first obligatory religious duty to be enjoined upon this Community [*Umma*] by Allāh (Exalted is He) was none other than the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”



19.

Concerning the practice of going out to the mosque [*masjid*], the special merit of worshipping in congregation [*jamā'a*], and the virtue of a humble attitude toward the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by Nāfi', on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Between the ritual prayer performed in congregation [*ṣalāt al-jamā'a*] and that performed individually [*al-fadhḥ*], the difference [on the scale of merit] is one of twenty-seven degrees.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

When the servant [of the Lord] performs his ritual ablution [*tawadda'a*], then goes out to join the congregation in the mosque [*masjid*], for every step he takes, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) records a good deed in his credit column, deletes a bad deed from his debit column, and raises his spiritual status by one degree. The welcome he receives from Allāh (Exalted is He) is just like the joyful welcome accorded to a long-absent relative, when he finally comes home to his family.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted by Abū 'Uthmān an-Nahdī, on the authority of Salmān [al-Fārisī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) says: "When someone performs his ritual ablution [*tawadda'a*] in his own house, and does his ablution really well [*aḥsana'l-wuḍū'*], then visits Me in one of My houses, he is coming to Me as a guest [*zā'ir*], and it is a duty [*ḥaqq*] incumbent upon the host [*mazūr*] to offer his guest an honorable and generous reception."²¹²

²¹² This Divine Saying is a Sacred Tradition [*Ḥadīth Qudsī*], not a verse [*āya*] of the Qur'ān.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Sālim ibn ‘Abdi’llāh, [the Caliph] ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

“Gabriel came to the Prophet (peace be upon them both) and said to him: ‘To those who walk to the mosques [*masājid*] on foot, in the darkness of the night, you must convey the good news that they will be granted perfect light on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*]!’”

From a similar traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Abu’d-Dardā’ (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a person walks to the mosques [*masājid*] on foot, in the darkness of the night, Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him light on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*].

It is reported on the authority of Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that he once heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

The ritual prayer performed in congregation [*ṣalāt al-jamā‘a*] is more meritorious, by twenty-five degrees, than the ritual prayer performed in private [*ṣalāt al-fadhḥ*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by Nāfi‘, on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:²¹³

Between the ritual prayer performed in congregation [*ṣalāt al-jamā‘a*] and that performed individually [*al-fadhḥ*], the difference [on the scale of merit] is one of twenty-seven degrees.

From another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk (may Allāh be well pleased with him), we learn that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

O ‘Uthmān ibn Maẓ‘ūn,²¹⁴ if someone performs the daybreak prayer as a member of a congregation [*ṣalla ‘ṣ-ṣubḥ fī jamā‘a*], he will be credited with a Pilgrimage [*Ḥijja*] that has been blessed, and a Visitation [*‘Umra*] that is worthy of acceptance.²¹⁵

²¹³ The author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has already quoted this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) at the beginning of this subsection.

²¹⁴ ‘Uthmān ibn Maẓ‘ūn should not be confused with the Caliph, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, (may Allāh be well pleased with them both). The former was a talented poet, and a staunch supporter of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

²¹⁵ The term *Ḥijja* is applied to a specific performance of the *Ḥajj* [Pilgrimage]. For a full account of the rites of the *Ḥajj* [Pilgrimage] and the *‘Umra* [Visitation; Lesser Pilgrimage], see Vol. 1, pp. 26–52.

O ‘Uthmān, if someone performs the midday prayer as a member of a congregation [*ṣalla ‘ẓ-zuḥr fi jamā‘a*], he will be credited with twenty-five ritual prayers, each and every one of them just like it, and he will be awarded seventy degrees in the Garden of Paradise [*Jannat al-Firdaws*].

O ‘Uthmān, if someone performs the afternoon prayer as a member of a congregation [*ṣalla ‘l-‘aṣr fi jamā‘a*], then practices the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He) until the sun goes down, it will be to his credit as if he had emancipated a band of the offspring of Ishmael [*Ismā‘il*] from slavery, together with twelve thousand others for every man amongst them.

O ‘Uthmān, if someone performs the sunset prayer as a member of a congregation [*ṣalla ‘l-maghrib fi jamā‘a*], he will be credited with twenty-five ritual prayers, each and every one of them just like it, and he will be awarded seventy degrees in the Garden of Eden [*Jannat ‘Adn*].

O ‘Uthmān, if someone performs the late evening prayer as a member of a congregation [*ṣalla ‘l-‘ishā‘ al-ākḥira fi jamā‘a*], it will be just as if he had kept vigil on the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].²¹⁶

When a man sets out for the mosque [*masjid*], he is strongly recommended to approach it with a feeling of dread, a sense of apprehension, and an attitude of humility and submissiveness. He is also recommended to maintain a bearing of calm serenity and solemn dignity. He should persuade himself that he needs to improve his patterns of thought and behavior, by detaching himself from his recent involvement in the conditions and concerns of this lower world. He should set out in a spirit of hope and fear, self-abasement, humility and contrition, free from vain conceit, arrogant pride, boastfulness, and the desire to impress other people and win the admiration of his fellow creatures. He should set out with the intention of turning himself in the direction of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), by making his way to one of those houses of worship of His, which:

Allāh has allowed to be raised up,
and in which [He has allowed]
His Name to be commemorated;
glorifying Him therein,
in the mornings and the evenings,
are men whom neither commerce
nor trafficking diverts
from the remembrance of Allāh.
(24:36,37)

*adhina ‘llāhu an turfa‘a
wa yudhkara
fi-ha ‘smu-hu
yusabbihu la-hu
fihā bi‘l-ghuduwwi wa ‘l-āṣāl—
rijālun lā tulhī-him tijāratun
wa lā bai‘un
an dhikri ‘llāhi.*

²¹⁶ For a detailed account of the practice of keeping vigil during the nights of the month of Ramaḍān, especially the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*], see Vol. 3, pp. 126–35.

If the worshipper finds, on arriving at the mosque [*maṣjid*], that the congregational prayer is already in progress, he must join the congregation in performing whatever remains of the ritual prayer [*mā adraka mina 'ṣ-ṣalāti ṣallā ma'a 'l-jamā'a*]. Then he must make up [separately] for what he has missed. This is in accordance with the tradition [*ḥadīth*] reported on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If one of you arrives when the ritual prayer has already begun [*qad uqīmati 'ṣ-ṣalāt*], he should move forward unobtrusively [and join the ranks of the congregation]. He must perform as much of the congregational prayer as he is in time for, and then make up [separately] for the part that he has missed by arriving late.

In another version of this same tradition [*ḥadīth*], the wording is:

He should move forward with a bearing of calm serenity [*sakīna*] and solemn dignity [*waqār*].

The worshipper must be on his guard against vain conceit, in case it should come to be his motive for extraordinary diligence and unremitting perseverance in the performance of acts of worship [*'ibādāt*], because that would cause him to fall from the approving eye of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He). It would remove him from His nearness. It would make him blind to his true spiritual condition. It would deprive him of the light of his faculty of insight, and of the sweetness he used to discover in his worship. It would obscure the pure clarity of his spiritual experience [*ma'rifa*]. It might even result in his work being rejected and shattered, because we are traditionally informed that Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) will not accept any deed from those who give themselves airs, unless and until they repent. According to one traditional account [*ḥadīth*]:

Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*], the Bosom Friend of the All-Merciful [*Khalīl ar-Raḥmān*],²¹⁷ (peace be upon him), once devoted a whole night to vigil and worship [*ahyā laīla*].²¹⁸ Then, when day dawned, he took pride in the fact that he had kept vigil throughout the night. He said: "Good indeed is the Lord, the Lord of Abraham, and good indeed is His servant, Abraham!"

²¹⁷ The Prophet Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] (peace be upon him) is more usually called *Khalīlu'llah* [the Bosom Friend of Allāh]. The meaning, of course, is essentially the same, since *ar-Raḥmān* [the All-Merciful] is one of the Names of Allāh (Exalted is He).

²¹⁸ The noun corresponding to the verb *ahyā* is *ihyā'*. In non-religious contexts, the Arabic expression *ihyā' al-lail* (literally, enlivening the night, or bringing the night to life) means simply "to stay awake throughout the night." In a religious context, it refers to the practice of keeping vigil in order to enliven the night with religious service, worship, adoration and devotion.

But then, when it was time for his early morning meal, he found that no one would eat with him, although he (may Allāh bless him and give him peace) was fond of having other people eat with him. So he took his meal outside on the street, in the hope that someone passing by might stop and share it with him.

At this point, a pair of angels descended from heaven above. When they came toward him [in human form], Abraham (peace be upon him) invited them to eat breakfast with him. They accepted his invitation, so he said to them: “Come, let us go to this garden over here, for in it there is a fountain of water, so we can enjoy our breakfast beside it.”

So they went together into the garden, but only to find that the fountain had dried up, and there was not a drop of water in it. This was a very distressing experience for Abraham (peace be upon him), and he was terribly embarrassed about what he had said, since there was actually no water to be found. But the angels said to him: “O Abraham, offer a supplication to your Lord, and ask Him to restore the water to the fountain.”

Abraham (peace be upon him) accepted their advice and made his entreaty to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), but he received no response whatsoever. This troubled him greatly, so he said to the angels: “You two had better appeal to Allāh!” One of them thereupon offered a supplication, and the water returned to the fountain. Then the other angel made his supplication, and the fountain began to spout abundantly. Only then did they let him know that they were angels [in human form]. They explained to him that his vainglorious pride in his night of vigil had caused his supplication to be rejected, so that he received no response to his plea.

If this was how Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) treated His Bosom Friend, Abraham (peace be upon him), how can He be expected to deal with others?

Far from taking pride in his devout observance of religious duties, the servant [of the Lord] must be firmly convinced that all his commitment to worshipful obedience [*tāʿa*], and his zealous dedication to it, can only be attributed to helpful guidance [*tawfiq*] from Allāh, and to His blessing, favor, mercy and grace. He must therefore stand in His presence (Almighty and Glorious is He) with an attitude of reverence, humility and self-abasement, as if he could witness Him directly with his ordinary eyes. As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

You must worship Allāh as if you could see Him, for, even if you do not see Him, he surely does see you.

According to the Sacred Tradition [*Hadīth Qudsī*] that has been transmitted to us, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) told Jesus, the

son of Mary [*‘Īsā ’bnu Maryam*] (peace be upon them both), by way of inspiration:

When you stand in My presence, you must stand there with the attitude of one who is fearful, humble, and reproachful toward his own lower self [*nafs*], for it is surely deserving of reproach. And if you appeal to Me in supplication, your limbs must be trembling while you offer Me your supplication.

As we also know from traditional sources, Allāh (Exalted is He) conveyed the same message to Moses [*Mūsā*] (peace be upon him), likewise by way of inspiration.

From a report concerning Ibn Sīrīn (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), we learn that whenever he stood up to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], his face would turn ghastly pale, from fear and dread of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

In the case of Muslim ibn Yasār (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), as soon as he had embarked upon the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he became completely deaf to the sound of a human voice, or to any other sound for that matter, due to intense concentration on the prayer, and from fear of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

‘Āmir ibn ‘Abd Qais once said: “I would prefer to have daggers at odds between my shoulder blades, rather than be thinking of any worldly matter, while I am engaged in performing the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”

It was Sa‘d ibn Mu‘ādh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: “It has never once happened, while I was performing the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], that I talked to myself about any worldly matter, until I got up and left [the place of worship].”

Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

“Whenever [*‘Abdu’llāh*] ibn az-Zubair (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was engaged in performing the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he seemed like a very old man, on account of his great humility.

“As for Wahb (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), when he stood up to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he looked like someone who was catching a glimpse of Hell [*Jahannam*].

“In the case of ‘Utbat al-Ghulām, while he was engaged in performing the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], even in the season of winter, the sweat would be pouring from his skin. When people asked him why this was so, he

explained: ‘It is because of my acute sense of shame in the presence of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).’

“A fire once broke out in the house of Muslim ibn Yasār (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), while he was praying [*yuṣallī*] in one of its rooms. The people of Baṣra become alarmed, so they dashed out and extinguished the blaze. Muslim himself was quite unaware of the fire, until they had already put it out, and he had finished performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. On another occasion, it is said, he was praying in a large congregational mosque [*jāmi‘*], when a column of the building collapsed and fell right by his side. This caused a panic among the folk in the adjoining marketplace, but Muslim himself had no idea that it had happened.”

From a report concerning ‘Ammār ibn az-Zubair (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), we learn that he was once engaged in performing his ritual prayer [*yuṣallī*], having placed his sandals on the ground in front of him. He had recently repaired those sandals of his, and his attention wandered to the brand new straps. So, when he had finished his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he threw his sandals away, and he never wore sandals again, from then until the day he died (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

According to the story that is told about ar-Rabī‘ ibn Khaitham (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), he was once performing the ritual prayer [at night] as an act of voluntary devotion [*yuṣallī taṭawwū‘an*], having tethered in front of him a horse worth twenty thousand dirhams [silver coins]. Along came a thief, who untethered the horse and made off with it. Early the next morning, people came to commiserate with the unfortunate victim, so he told them: “As a matter of fact, I did happen to see the person unhitching it, but I was engaged at the time in something far dearer to me than my horse.” Later that same day, lo and behold, the horse came trotting out of nowhere, until it halted right in front of him!

According to a traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once performed the ritual prayer [*ṣallā*] while wearing a black shawl, in which there was a thread of red fiber. As soon as he had concluded the prayer by pronouncing the final salutation [*sallama*],²¹⁹ he complained: “This thread distracted me from my ritual prayer [*alhā-nī ‘an ṣalātī*]!”

²¹⁹ The verb *sallama* means “he pronounced the *taslīma* [salutation].” In other words, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) concluded his prayer by turning his head to the right and saying: “*as-salāmu ‘alaikum wa rahmatu’llāh* [Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh],” then turning his head to the left and repeating these same words.

Allāh (Exalted is He) has extolled the virtue of those who are humble in their attitude toward the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], for He has told us (Exalted is He):

Successful indeed are the believers, who are humble in their prayers. (23:1,2)	<i>qad aflaha 'l-mu' minūn:</i> <i>alladhīna hum</i> <i>fi ṣalāti-him khāshī'ūn.</i>
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As explained by az-Zuhrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), this attitude of humility signifies a person's calm and complete commitment to his ritual prayer [*sukūn al-mar'i fi ṣalāti-hi*].

When a person is in this state, it has been said, he knows neither who is to his right, nor who is to his left, during the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], on account of his total preoccupation with the prayer itself. It is for this very reason that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

In the ritual prayer, there must truly be a focus of concentration [*inna fi 'ṣ-ṣalāti la-shughlan*].



20.

Concerning the importance of performing the five daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*] with all due care and attention to detail, and on what we know from traditional sources about the punishment awaiting those who neglect to perform them correctly.

According to a report transmitted by al-A‘^ṣmash, on the authority of Shaqīq ibn Salama, it was related by Ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If the servant [of the Lord] performs the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] during the first part of the time prescribed for it, his prayer will rise up into the sky above, and it will have a light to guide it all the way to the Heavenly Throne [*‘Arsh*]. It will seek forgiveness on behalf of its owner until the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], and it will say: “May Allāh take good care of you, as you took good care of me!”

If the servant [of the Lord] performs the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], but not at the time prescribed for it, his prayer will rise up toward the sky, but without a light to guide it. So, when it reaches a certain point in the air above, it will flap about like an article of clothing, or a tattered rag, and he will feel it slapping him in the face. Then it will say: “May Allāh neglect you, as you neglected me!”

According to the tradition [*ḥadīth*] narrated by ‘Ubāda ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs the ritual ablution [*tawaddū‘a*], and does the ablution [*wuḍū‘*] with the utmost care and attention to detail, then proceeds to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and does every part of it perfectly, whether it be the bowing posture [*rukū‘*], the prostration [*sujūd*], or the Qur’ānic recitation [*qirā‘a*], the prayer [*ṣalāt*] will say to him: “May Allāh take good care of you, as you took good care of me!”

Then it will be raised up into the sky above, accompanied by a radiance and a guiding light. The gates of heaven will therefore be opened to let it pass through

so that it can travel all the way to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and then intercede with Him on behalf of its owner.

If, on the other hand, the worshipper is negligent in his performance of the bowing posture [*rukūʿ*], the prostration [*sujūd*], or the Qurʾānic recitation [*qirāʾa*], the prayer [*ṣalāt*] will say to him: “May Allāh neglect you, as you neglected me!” Then it will be raised up in darkness toward heaven, so the gates of heaven will be shut to keep it out. It will then flap about in the air like a tattered piece of clothing, and its owner will feel it slapping him in the face.

Ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is also reported as having said:

“I once asked Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace): ‘Which deeds are the most meritorious?’ and he replied: ‘The ritual prayers performed at the times prescribed for them [*aṣ-ṣalawāt li-waḡti-hinna*], the dutiful treatment of one’s parents [*birr al-wālidain*],²²⁰ and the sacred struggle waged in the cause of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) [*al-jihād fī sabīli ’llāh (ʿazza wa jall)*].”²²¹

According to a traditional report from Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Maḥdḥūra, the muezzin [*muʾadhḥin*], his father told him that his grandfather (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once told him that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had said:

The first part of the time prescribed [for the ritual prayer] is Allāh’s good pleasure [*Riḍwānu’llāh*]. The middle section of the prescribed time is Allāh’s mercy [*Raḥmatu’llāh*]. The last part of the prescribed time is Allāh’s pardon [*ʿAfwu’llāh*].²²²

Allāh (Exalted is He) has warned us:

So woe to those who pray,
but are heedless
of their prayers,
and to those who make a show,
yet withhold the smallest charity.
(107:4,5)

*fa-wailun li’l-muṣallīn:
alladhīna hum ʿan
ṣalāti-him sāhūn:
alladhīna hum yurāʾūn:
wa yamnaʿūna ’l-māʿūn.*

²²⁰ For a detailed account of filial piety [*birr*], see Vol. 1, pp. 96–99.

²²¹ The Islāmic term *jihād* [sacred struggle or holy war] is all too frequently misunderstood, especially but not only by non-Muslims. Sometimes, alas, its meaning is willfully misrepresented—by polemicists hostile to Islām, as well as by misguided zealots within the Islāmic Community itself. Fortunately for us, the works of Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) contain many valuable explanations of the true significance of the term *jihād*. (See, for instance, Vol. 2, pp. 44–45.)

²²² This is reminiscent of the well-known saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) concerning the month of Ramādān:

It is a month the beginning of which is a mercy, the middle of which is a forgiveness, and the last part of which is a deliverance from the Fire of Hell.

Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was commenting on these words, when he said: “By Allāh, it is not that they abandon their prayers altogether, but rather that they postpone them beyond the times prescribed for their performance.”

Sa‘d (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said: “I asked the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

So woe to those who pray,
but are heedless
of their prayers.

*fa-wailum li'l-muṣallīn:
alladhīna hum ‘an
ṣalāti-him sāhūn.*

—and he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“They are those who postpone the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] beyond the time prescribed for its performance.”

Al-Barā’ ibn ‘Āzib al-Awsī al-Anṣārī²²³ (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said, when commenting on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

So now there has succeeded them
a later generation, who have wasted
the prayer and followed
the desires of the flesh.
So they will meet with temptation.
(19:59)

*fa-khalafa-hum min ba‘di-him
khalfun aḏā‘u ‘ṣ-ṣalāta
wa ‘ttaba‘u ‘sh-
shahawāti
fa-sawfa yalqawna ghayyā.*

—“Temptation [*Ghayy*]’ is the name of a valley in Hell [*Jahannam*].”

Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was also commenting on these words, when he said: “The only person to enter it will be someone who wastes the times prescribed for his performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of ‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was speaking about the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] one day, and he said:

For someone who observes it [i.e., the ritual prayer] with all due care, it will be a guiding light, a proof [of righteousness], and a means of salvation on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*]. But for someone who fails to observe it with all due care, it will not be a guiding light, and it will be neither a proof [of

²²³ Al-Barā’ ibn ‘Āzib al-Awsī al-Anṣārī (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and a devoted follower of ‘Alī (may Allāh ennoble his countenance). He died in A.H. 71 or 72.

righteousness] nor a means of salvation from the Fire of Hell. On the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], he will be in the company of Qārūn, Pharaoh, Hāmān²²⁴ and Ubayy ibn Khalaf.²²⁵

According to a traditional report transmitted by al-Ḥarth, on the authority of the Commander of the Believers [*Amīr al-Muʿminīn*], ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone treats his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] with disrespect, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will subject that person to fifteen different punishments, six of them before death, three at the time of death, three in the grave, and three when he emerges from the grave [at the Resurrection].

As for the six punishments to be inflicted on him before death, they are the following:

1. He will be deprived of his reputation as one of the righteous [*ṣāliḥīn*].
2. He will be deprived of the blessed quality [*baraka*] of life.
3. He will be deprived of the blessed quality [*baraka*] of sustenance.
4. He will receive no credit whatsoever for any deeds of goodness, until he perfects his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].
5. His supplication [*duʿāʾ*] will not be answered.
6. No plea on his behalf will be included in the supplication of the righteous [*duʿāʾ aṣ-ṣāliḥīn*].

As for the three punishments to be inflicted on him at the time of death, they are the following:

1. He will die so thirsty that, even if seven oceans were poured into his throat, his thirst could not be quenched.
2. He will die suddenly and without warning.
3. The weight of all the iron in this world, and of all its wood and stones, will be heaped upon his neck and shoulders.

As for the three punishments to be inflicted on him in the grave, they are the following:

1. His grave will be too narrow and cramped for him to lie in comfort.
2. His grave will be dark and gloomy place for him.
3. He will become incapable of articulate speech.

Finally, as for the three punishments to be inflicted on him when he emerges from the grave [at the Resurrection], they are the following:

1. When he meets Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), he will find that He is angry with him.
2. When he is called to account, his reckoning will be very harsh and severe.
3. He will be banished from the presence of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and cast into the Fire of Hell, unless Allāh pardons him.

²²⁴ Qārūn (who is called Korah in the Hebrew scriptures) and Pharaoh and Hāmān (Pharaoh's prime minister) are mentioned together in the Qurʾān (40:23,24).

²²⁵ Ubayy ibn Khalaf was a treacherous enemy of the Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace). According to some of the traditional commentators, he is referred to in Q. 25:27.

21.

Concerning the tremendous importance and the enormous significance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

Allāh (Blessed and Exalted is He) commanded His Messenger Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. In many Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*], Allāh first of all revealed his Prophetic mission [*awḥā bi'n-Nubuwwa*], then his duty to perform and establish the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], before any other good practice [*amal*], and before any other obligatory religious duty [*farīḍa*]. For instance, consider His words (Exalted is He):

Recite what has been revealed
to you of the Book,
and establish the ritual prayer.
(29:45)

*utlu mā ūḥiya ilai-ka
mina 'l-kitābi
wa aqimi 'ṣ-ṣalāh.*

To this He then added (Almighty and Glorious is He):

The ritual prayer helps to prevent
indecency and reprehensible
behavior. (29:45)

*inna 'ṣ-ṣalāta tanhā
'ani 'l-fahshā'i
wa 'l-munkar.*

Allāh (Glorious and Exalted is He) also said [to His Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]:

And instruct your family to pray,
and be patient in it.
We ask of you no provision;
We provide for you. (20:132)

*wa 'mur ahla-ka bi'ṣ-ṣalāti
wa 'ṣṭabir 'alai-hā:
lā nas'alu-ka rizqā:
nahnu narzuqu-k.*

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has also addressed all the believers [*mu'minīn*], commanding them to turn to patience [*ṣabr*] and the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], for help with all their efforts to serve Him through acts of worshipful obedience [*ṭā'āt*], for He has said:

O all you who believe, seek help
in patience and prayer; surely Allāh
is with those who are patient.

*yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanu 'sta'īnu
bi'ṣ-ṣabri wa 'ṣ-ṣalāh:*

inna 'llāha ma'a 'ṣ-ṣābirīn.

He has also said (Exalted is He):

<p>And We appointed them to be leaders guiding by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good deeds, and the performance of the prayer, and the payment of the alms-due, and Us they served. (21:73)</p>	<p><i>wa ja'alnā-hum a'immatan yahdūna bi-amri-nā wa awḥainā ilai-him fi'la'l-khairāti wa iqāma 'ṣ-ṣalāti wa itā'a 'z-zakāh: wa kānū la-nā 'ābidīn.</i></p>
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Here he has mentioned all good deeds in general, they being all acts of worshipful obedience [*tā'āt*], together with the avoidance of all acts of sinful disobedience [*ma'āsī*]. Then He has singled out the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] for special mention, and enjoined it upon them in particular.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) bequeathed the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] to his Community, at the point of his departure from this world, for he said:

Allāh, Allāh, Allāh! In [your dutiful performance of] the ritual prayer, and in [your treatment of] what your right hands possess [*fi 'ṣ-ṣalāti wa fi-mā malakat aimānu-kum*].²²⁶

This was his final bequest (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and indeed, we are told in the tradition [*ḥadīth*] that this was the last bequest of every Prophet [*Nabī*] to his Community [*Umma*], and his final testament to them at the point of his departure from this world.

The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] was thus the first obligatory religious duty [*farīda*] to be made incumbent upon the Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and upon his Community [*Umma*], and the dutiful performance thereof was the last injunction bequeathed by him to his Community. It will be the final element to be taken away from Islām, and the first item about which the servant [of the Lord] will be questioned on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], when he is called to account for his religious practice. It is the supporting pillar [*amūd*] of Islām, and once it has gone, there will no longer be either any such thing as religion [*dīn*] or any such thing as Islām. According to the tradition [*ḥadīth*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The first element of your religion [*dīn*] that you lose will be fidelity [*amāna*], and the last element of it that you lose will be the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. The time will come when only good-for-nothing types will still be performing the ritual prayer [*la-yuṣalliyanna aqwāmūn lā khalāqa la-hum*].

²²⁶ The Qur'ānic expression "what your right hands possess [*mā malakat aimānu-kum*]" means "your slaves."

According to the doctrine of our Imām, Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal]²²⁷ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), a person who abstains from the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] should be condemned as an unbeliever [*yukaffar*], if he abstains from it deliberately, denying its obligatory status [*jāḥidan li-wujūbi-hā*], in which case he is subject to the penalty of death. On this point there is no difference of opinion within the Ḥanbalī school of Islāmic jurisprudence [*madhhab*].

As for the case where a person abstains from the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] out of careless neglect and laziness, although he does maintain his belief in its obligatory status, he must be summoned to perform it within a certain time. Then, if he does not perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] before the time allowed for it has expired, he should be condemned as an unbeliever [*yukaffar*], and he should be put to death by the sword for his unbelief [*kufr*].

In each of the two cases described above, the execution should be carried out three days after the guilty individual has been called upon to repent [and has refused to do so], as in the essentially similar case of the apostate [*murtaḍḍ*]. The offender's property should then be confiscated as *fai'* [booty obtained without fighting], and deposited in the public treasury [*baī al-māl*] of the Muslims. No funeral prayer should be performed over him [*lā yuṣallā 'alai-hi*], nor should he be buried in any of the cemeteries in which Muslims are interred.

According to one account of his doctrine, however, our Imām, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), maintained that the death sentence should not be imposed, in the case of careless neglect, unless and until the offender has failed to perform three [consecutive] ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*], and there is not enough time to spare before the fourth becomes due. He should then be put to death in the execution of a penalty specifically prescribed by the sacred law [*ḥadd*],²²⁸ as in the case of a respectably married man who has been

²²⁷ See note 7 on p. 7 above.

²²⁸ The specific punishments prescribed by Islāmic law [*ḥudūd*, plural of *ḥadd*], and the offenses for which they are prescribed, are as follows: (1) For *zinā* in the sense of adultery: death by stoning [*rajm*]. (2) For *zinā* in the sense of fornication: one hundred lashes. (3) For *qadhf* [falsely accusing a married person of adultery]: eighty lashes. (4) For apostasy [*irtidād*]: death. (5) For drinking intoxicating beverages [*shurb*]: eighty lashes. (6) For theft [*sariqa*]: amputation of the right hand. (7) For highway robbery [*qaṭ' at-tariq*]: (a) amputation of hands and feet (for robbery only) or (b) death by the sword or crucifixion (for robbery with murder).

convicted of unlawful sexual intercourse [*az-zānī al-muḥṣan*].²²⁹ His legal status [*ḥukm*] should be that of the Muslim dead, which means that his Muslim heirs [*waratha*] are entitled to inherit his estate.²³⁰

According to the doctrine of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the offender should not be put to death. Instead, he should be held in prison until he performs the ritual prayer [*yuṣallī*]. That is to say, he must either repent, or languish in prison until he dies.

According to the doctrine of Imām ash-Shāfi‘ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the offender should be put to death by the sword, in the execution of a penalty specifically prescribed by the sacred law [*ḥadd*], and should not be treated as an unbeliever [*lā yukaffar*].

We have already presented the evidence that points to this offender’s unbelief [*kufr*], since it is contained within the Qur’ānic verses [*āyāt*] and Prophetic traditions [*akhbār*] cited above. For the purpose of further substantiating that evidence, let us conclude this subsection by adding the following citations:

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdi’llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

To close the gap between a man on the one side, and unbelief [*kufr*] and associating partners with Allāh [*shirk*] on the other, all it takes is the abandonment of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of ‘Abdu’llāh ibn Zaid, who passed it on from his father (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Between us [the believers] and them [the unbelievers] lies the abandonment of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. If a person ceases to observe it, he is thereby guilty of unbelief [*kafara*].

According to a traditional report from Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad, who transmitted it on the authority of his father (may Allāh be well pleased

²²⁹ Before a respectably married man [*muḥṣan*] can be convicted of unlawful sexual intercourse [*zīnā*], Islāmic law requires his accuser to produce four male witnesses of impeccable character, each of whom must be prepared to testify that he had actually seen “the pen in the pen-holder.” Failing such testimony, the person making the accusation is himself subject to a penalty of eighty lashes.

²³⁰ In other words, according to this version of the Ḥanbalī doctrine, this offender should be punished as a guilty Muslim, not as an unbeliever.

with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once noticed that a man, during the performance of his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], was bobbing his head, with the kind of pecking motion made by crows, so he said:

If this creature were to die [at his moment], he would die beyond the pale of the religion [*dīn*] of Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

According to a traditional report from 'Aṭīyya al-'Awfī, who transmitted it on the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If a man abandons his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] deliberately, his name will be inscribed on the gate of the Fire of Hell, in the list of those who are doomed to enter it.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Oh yes indeed, if someone forgets about the prayer of the first third of the night [*ṣalāt al-'atama*], and lies down to sleep without having performed it, the angels will say to him: "May your eyes neither sleep nor rest! May Allāh keep you in suspense between the Garden of Paradise and the Fire of Hell, as you have kept us in suspense!"



22.

Concerning forty-five bad habits that should be outlawed from the performance of the obligatory ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-farīda*].

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the learned scholars [*‘ulamā’*] among the Companions [*Aṣḥāb*] of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to maintain that forty-five habits are reprehensible, and should be outlawed from the performance of the obligatory ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-farīda*], namely:

1. Grunting [*tanaḥnuḥ*] with deliberate intent.
2. Fidgeting [*tashāghul*] with deliberate intent.
3. Sneezing [*ta’āṭus*] with deliberate intent.
4. Raising one’s head and gazing up toward the sky.

In this case, the reason for disapproval can best be explained by citing the following traditional report:

“The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to turn his gaze toward the sky above, but then he received the Qur’ānic revelation:

Successful indeed are the believers, who are humble in their prayers. (23:1,2)	<i>qad aflaha ‘l-mu’ minūn: alladhīna hum fī ṣalāti-him khāshī’ūn.</i>
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—so Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) kept his head bowed down [*ṭa’ ṭa’ a ra’ sa-hu*].”

This became the basis for the recommendation that a man should not extend his gaze beyond the edge of his prayer mat [*muṣallā*].

5. Pressing the flesh beneath the chin against the upper part of the chest [*ilṣāq al-ḥanak bi’ ṣ-ṣadr*].
6. Inspecting one’s clothes in search of lice and fleas [*faly ath-thawb*].
7. Wearily stretching one’s limbs [*tamaṭṭī*].
8. Heaving a deep sigh [*tanaffus aṣ-ṣu’ adā’*].

9. Shutting one's eyes [*taghmīd al-‘ainain*].

10. Turning and glancing around during the prayer [*al-iltifāt fi ‘ṣ-ṣalāt*].

According to a traditional report, ‘Utba ibn ‘Āmir (may Allāh be well pleased with him) referred to this when he said, in commenting on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Those who are constant
in their prayer. (70:23)

*alladhīna hum ‘alā
ṣalāti-him dā’imūn.*

—“While they are performing the prayer, they turn neither to the right nor to the left.”

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said: “I once asked Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) about the case of a man who turns and glances around during the ritual prayer [*ṣalat*], and he replied:

“That is nothing but a crooked trick, by which the Devil [*ash-Shaiṭān*] contrives to steal from the prayer performed by My servant.”

It is said that Ṭalḥa (viz., the son of Muṣrif) once came to visit ‘Abd al-Jabbār ibn Wā’il. He found the latter involved with a group of people, so he whispered something to him, and took his leave. ‘Abd al-Jabbār then said to his companions: “Do you know what he said? He said: ‘When I saw you yesterday, I noticed that you were turning and glancing around, while you were performing the ritual prayer [*wa anta tuṣallī*].’”

From the following tradition [*ḥadīth*], we learn that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

When the servant [of the Lord] begins the ritual prayer [*fataḥa ‘ṣ-ṣalāt*], Allāh confronts him with His face, and He does not turn it away, unless the servant is the one who turns aside, or glances to right and left.

To quote another tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

As long as the servant [of the Lord] is constant in the performance of his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he possesses three characteristics, namely: (1) Righteousness [*bīrr*] is steadily showering down upon him, from the clouds in the sky onto the parting of the hair on his head. (2) Angels are flying to and fro, between a spot next to his feet and the clouds in the sky. (3) An angelic herald is crying: “If the person at prayer [*al-muṣallī*] only knew with Whom he is intimately conversing [*yunāji*], he would not move away [*ma ‘ntaqal*].

That is to say, he would not turn around and leave.

The habit of turning and glancing around [*ilitifāt*] is very reprehensible indeed. It has even been said that it cuts off the prayer [*ṣalāt*] completely. It certainly indicates a serious lack of respect for the prayer [*ṣalāt*], and for its rules of conduct [*ādāb*].

11. Adopting the canine squatting posture known as *iq'ā'*,²³¹ when in the sitting position [*qu'ūd*] during [the final stage of] the ritual prayer.²³²

12. Refusing to follow the leader of the prayer [*imām*].

13. Spreading the forearms wide, while in the posture of prostration [*sujūd*].

14. Placing the chest on the thighs, while in the posture of prostration [*sujūd*].

15. Pressing the armpits close to the sides of the body, while in the posture of prostration [*sujūd*].

The worshipper must keep a space between his armpits and the sides of his body, and not squeeze the former close against the latter. We know this from the traditional report concerning the example set by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in which it is stated:

“If a little lamb had tried to pass beneath his arms, when he was performing the act of prostration [*idhā sajada*], it would have been able to get through.”

This was due to the fact that he went to great lengths in raising his elbows away from the sides of his body, as we are told in another tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

“When Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was performing the act of prostration [*idhā sajada*], he used to keep his upper arms well apart from the sides of his body.”

16. Keeping the fingers spread apart, while in the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], when they should actually be kept close together.

²³¹ As Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 1, p. 353:

Subject to disapproval during the ritual prayer is the squatting posture known as *iq'ā'*, which means that a person stretches the upper sides of his feet out on the ground and sits on his heels, or that he sits with both his buttocks on the ground while keeping both his feet erect. In the words of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

It is a way of squatting that is like the squatting posture of the dog; it is forbidden to adopt it.

²³² It is while in the sitting position [*qu'ūd*] that the worshipper concludes his performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], by pronouncing the greetings [*tahiyayāt*], the testimony [*tashahhud*], and the salutation [*taslīma*].

17. Placing the hands short of the knees, while in the posture of bowing [*rukūʿ*].

18. Planting one foot on top of the other.

19. Keeping either foot dangling off the ground.

20. Allowing one's waist-wrapper [*izār*] or trouser pants [*sarāwīl*] to hang loosely suspended.²³³

21. Picking one's teeth [*takhlīl*].

22. Licking one's lips [*talammuz*].

23. Swallowing food amounting to a grain or a couple of grains.

24. Belching up undigested food, and then swallowing it down again.

25. Expelling saliva with the tongue, while in the posture of prostration [*sujūd*].

26. Blowing wind, while in the posture of prostration [*sujūd*].

27. Arranging pebbles [on the ground in front of you].

28. Stepping sideways.

29. Raising your voice above that of the person sitting next to you, when pronouncing the testimony [*tashahhud*].²³⁴

²³³ According to a traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The Muslim's mode of wearing the *izār* [waist-wrapper] is to have it reaching the middle of the shank. There is no offense and no sin with respect to what is between that point and the ankles, but if anything is lower than the ankles, it is in the Fire of Hell. If anyone trails his *izār* out of vain conceit, Allāh (Exalted is He) will pay no attention to him. (See Vol. 1 p. 352.)

²³⁴ The testimony [*tashahhud*] is pronounced after two cycles of prayer [*rakʿatain*] and, in a prayer consisting of more than two cycles, in the final stage of the last cycle. While in the sitting position [*quʿūd*], the worshipper recites:

Greetings, prayers and good deeds
are due to Allāh. Peace be upon you,
O Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh
and His blessings! Peace be on us,
and on all the righteous servants of Allāh.

*at-taḥīyyātu li'llāhi wa 'ṣ-ṣalawātu
wa 'ṭ-ṭayyibāt—as-salāmu 'alai-ka
ayyuha 'n-nabīyyu wa raḥmatu'llāhi
wa barakātuh—as-salāmu 'alai-nā
wa 'alā 'ibādi'llāhi 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn.*

Then, while raising the index finger of the right hand, and pointing it to emphasize the affirmation of Divine Oneness, the worshipper continues:

I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh,
and I bear witness that Muḥammad
is His servant and His Messenger.

*ashhadu an lā ilāha illa'llāh—
wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan
'abdu-hu wa rasūluh.*

Such is the wording preferred by Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them). There are slight differences in the version adopted by followers of the school [*madhhab*] of Imām ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them), who recite:

Blessed greetings
and good prayers are due to Allāh.
Peace be upon you,
O Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh
and His blessings! Peace be on us,
and on all the righteous servants of Allāh.

*at-taḥīyyātu 'l-mubārakatu
wa 'ṣ-ṣalawātu 'ṭ-ṭayyibātu li'llāh—
as-salāmu 'alai-ka
ayyuha 'n-nabīyyu wa raḥmatu'llāhi
wa barakātuh—as-salāmu 'alai-nā
wa 'alā 'ibādi'llāhi 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn.*

I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh.
And I bear witness that Muḥammad
is the Messenger of Allāh.

*ashhadu an lā ilāha illa'llāh—
wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan
rasūlu'llāh.*

30. Recognizing the identity of the person to your right, and that of the person to your left.

31. Nodding and winking [*īmā'*].

32. Making pointed gestures [*ishāra*].

33. Swallowing vomit [*jashā'*], or anything that emerges from the throat.

34. Deliberate coughing [*isti'āl*].

35. Blowing one's nose [*tamakhkhuṭ*].

36. Spitting [*tabazzuq*].

37. Paying attention to clothes.

38. Rubbing the dust from one's brow, before leaving [at the end of the prayer].

39. Arranging pebbles more than one single time.

40. Dusting the spot where the forehead will be placed in the act of prostration [*sujūd*].

41. Inserting the supplication [*du'ā'*] after the testimony [*tashahhud*], if you are acting as a prayer leader [*imām*].

42. Sitting in the prayer-niche [*miḥrāb*], after the final salutation [*taslīm*], but before the prayer leader [*imām*] has shifted from his place and moved over to his left.

43. Knotting the fingers with the hand during the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

44. Fiddling with one's beard.

45. Fiddling with one's gown.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

Allāh pays no attention to the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] performed by a man whose heart is not in it, as well as his body.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once noticed a man fiddling with his beard, so he said:

If only this man's heart would be humbly submissive, his physical limbs and organs would also be humbly submissive.

Al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once noticed that a man was playing with the pebbles [on the ground in front of him], and that he was saying as he did so: "O Allāh, marry me to one

of those maidens of Paradise with such lovely eyes [*al-hūr al-‘īn*]!”²³⁵ So al-Ḥasan said: “It must be hard for the Matchmaker to take your marriage proposal seriously, since you offer it while playing a silly game!”

According to ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abdi’llāh, [his father] ‘Abdu’llāh [ibn Mas‘ūd] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

“If people will insist on raising their eyes toward the sky above, the outcome may well be that their eyesight does not come back to them!”

That is to say, in the course of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

It was al-Awzā‘ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) who said:

“Although two men are both engaged in the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], the difference between them is as great as the difference between heaven and earth. One of them is dedicated to Allāh (Exalted is He) with his heart, while the other is heedless and inattentive [*lāh wa sāh*].”

From one authentic traditional report [*khābar*], we learn that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The worshipper [*muṣallī*] will be rewarded for half of his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], provided that he remembers [what he is doing] for one tenth of it.

That is to say, provided that he is consciously aware of it, and that his heart is present in it.

According to another tradition [*ḥadīth*], he also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

[For the performance of one prayer] a worshipper [*muṣallī*] may be credited with four hundred ritual prayers [*ṣalāt*]; another worshipper may be credited with two hundred ritual prayers; another worshipper may be credited with one hundred and fifty ritual prayers; and yet another worshipper may be credited with seventy ritual prayers.

One ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] may be equal in value to fifty ritual prayers; another ritual prayer may be equal in value to twenty-seven ritual prayers; another ritual prayer may be equal in value to ten ritual prayers; and yet another ritual prayer may have the value of just one single ritual prayer [*ṣalāt wāḥida*].

As for the worshipper who is credited with four hundred ritual prayers [*ṣalāt*], he is the one who performs the prayer [*yuṣallī*] at Mecca, in the Sacred House [*al-Bait al-Ḥarām*], together with the prayer leader [*imām*], as a member of the congregation, without having missed the initial declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*at-takbīrat al-ūlā*].²³⁶

²³⁵ See note 9 on p. 9 above.

²³⁶ This initial declaration is often called the consecratory declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-iḥrām*]. It is the affirmation “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],” which is pronounced as an act of consecration [*iḥrām*] at the beginning of the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

As for the worshipper who is credited with two hundred ritual prayers [*ṣalāt*], he is the prayer leader [*imām*], the one who leads the people in prayer [*ya'ummu'n-nās*], but only after he has made himself thoroughly familiar with all the rules that govern the correct performance of the ritual prayer [*aḥkām aṣ-ṣalāt*].

As for the worshipper who is credited with one hundred and fifty ritual prayers [*ṣalāt*], he is the muezzin [*mu'adhḥim*], meaning someone who gives the call to prayer [*adhān*].

As for the worshipper who is credited with seventy ritual prayers [*ṣalāt*], he is the one who brushes his teeth [*yastāku*]²³⁷ and performs his ritual ablution [*wuḍū'*] correctly in every detail, then performs the ritual prayer in the large congregational mosque, as a member of the congregation [*yuṣallī fi 'l-jāmi' fi 'l-jamā'a*].

As for the worshipper who is credited with fifty ritual prayers [*ṣalāt*], he is the man who performs the ritual prayer in the large congregational mosque, together with the prayer leader, as a member of the congregation [*yuṣallī fi 'l-jāmi' ma'a 'l-imām fi 'l-jamā'a*], even though he may have missed the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-iḥrām*].

As for the worshipper who is credited with twenty-seven ritual prayers [*ṣalāt*], he is the man who performs his ritual ablution [*wuḍū'*] correctly in every detail, then performs the ritual prayer in a small mosque [*masjid*], as a member of the congregation, and without having missed the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-iḥrām*].

As for the worshipper who is credited with ten ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*], he is the man who joins the congregation [*jamā'a*], although he arrives after the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-iḥrām*] has already been pronounced [by the prayer leader].

As for the worshipper who is credited with one single ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he is the one who performs the prayer [*yuṣallī*] by himself, not as a member of a congregation.

As for the worshipper who is not credited with any ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] at all, he is the one who keeps bobbing his head like a rooster, and does not properly perform the acts of bowing [*rukū'*] and prostration [*sujūd*]. This is the person whose ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] will be draped in the air like a tattered rag, so that its owner will feel it slapping him in the face. He will be told: "May Allāh not take care of you, as you have failed to take care of your ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]!"



²³⁷ The verb *yastāku* is derived from the same three-consonant root—*s-w-k*—as the noun *siwāk*, which denotes a small stick, softened at the tip by chewing or beating to form a kind of toothbrush.

23.

**Concerning the intention [*niyya*]
that must be formulated by every worshipper
[*muṣallī*] before he begins his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].
A detailed account of the movements, postures and
utterances that constitute the performance of the
ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].**

It is incumbent upon every worshipper [*muṣallī*] to formulate the intention [*niyya*],²³⁸ before proceeding to perform his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

He should picture the Ka‘ba, the Sacred House [*al-Bait al-Ḥarām*], in front of him, and keep his eyes fixed steadily upon it, as we have already explained in the early part of this book.²³⁹

He should be absolutely convinced [*yatayaqqan*] that he is standing in the presence of Allāh (Exalted is He), and he should not doubt that he is holding himself erect in the sight of Allāh, so that He is really seeing him. This certitude is fully justified, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has said:

Put your trust in the All-Glorious, the All-Compassionate, who sees you when you stand and [who sees] your bowing down among those who prostrate themselves. (26:217–9)	<i>wa tawakkal ‘ala ‘l-‘Azīzi ‘r- Raḥīm: alladhī yarā-ka ḥīna taqūm: wa taqalluba-ka fi ‘s-sājidīn.</i>
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²³⁸ At the very beginning of his famous *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imām al-Bukhārī has prefaced his vast compilation of authentic Prophetic traditions [*aḥādīth*] with the saying of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Actions derive their value from the intentions [on the strength of which they are performed], and every man is credited with what he actually intended [*innama ‘l-a‘mālu bi-‘n-niyyāti wa innamā li-kulli ‘mri’ in bi-mā nawā*].

²³⁹ See Vol. 1, p. 10, where the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained:

As for facing the *Qibla*, this means facing the actual Ka‘ba if one is in Mecca or any place in its vicinity. If one is at a distance from it, however, it means facing in its direction, [as nearly as this can be ascertained] by the exercise of judgment [*ijtihād*] and by making the effort to deduce it from all available evidence, such as that provided by the stars, the sun, the winds, etc.

It is also confirmed by the words of the Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

You must worship Allāh as if you could see Him, for, even if you do not see Him, he surely does see you.

When he formulates his intention [*yanwī*] to perform the obligatory ritual prayer [*aṣ-ṣalāt al-farīda*], it is more appropriate [though not absolutely essential] for the worshipper to state specifically whether it is to be performed as a prompt fulfillment [*adā'*] [i.e., within the prescribed time], or as an overdue fulfillment [*qaḍā'*] [i.e., to make up for his having failed to perform it during the prescribed time].²⁴⁰

The worshipper should then raise his hands to the lobes of his ears, or to a position level with his shoulders. (We have given a detailed description of this in the early part of this book.)²⁴¹ As to whether he should keep his fingers close together, or whether he should spread them apart, there are two conflicting traditional accounts [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine on this point].

When he raises his hands, and proclaims the Supreme Greatness of Allāh by saying “*Allāhu Akbar!*” it is as if the worshipper is removing the veil between him and Allāh (Exalted is He). He has now arrived at the place where it is not permissible to turn and glance around, and where no distraction is allowed, because he must realize that he is in the sight of One who sees his every movement, and who knows what is churning in his lower self [*nafs*], as well as all that is concealed within his innermost being [*sirr*] and his heart [*qalb*].

²⁴⁰ The verb *yanwī* [he intends; he is intending to...], like the corresponding noun *niyya* [intention], is derived from the three-consonant root *n-w-y*. The basic form of the verb is *nawā* [he has intended; he has made it his intention to...]. The form *nawaitu* [I have intended; I have made it my intention to...] is used by the worshipper when he formulates his intention in Arabic.

²⁴¹ Thus, a typical formulation of the intention [*niyya*] to perform an obligatory prayer, within the prescribed time, would be:

I have made it my intention
to perform the obligatory sunset prayer,
[consisting of] three cycles,
within the prescribed time,
for the sake of Allāh (Exalted is He).

nawaitu
uṣṣallī farḍa 'l-maghrib—
thalātha raka'ātin
adā' an
li'llāhi (ta'ālā).

If the same prayer is to be performed, but after the prescribed time has elapsed, the word *qaḍā'* *an* should be substituted in place of *adā' an*.

²⁸¹ See Vol. 1, p. 15, where Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained:

This means that one's hands are brought up close to the shoulders, the thumbs are held beside the lobes of the ears, and the tips of the fingers next to upper parts of the ears. Then the hands are lowered again.

The worshipper must therefore fix his gaze on the spot where he will shortly place his forehead in the act of prostration [*sujūd*]. He must not turn and glance to right and left, nor raise his head toward the sky above, and when he says:

“Glory be to You, O Allāh, and praise be to You! Blessed is Your Name, and Exalted is Your Majesty. There is no god other than You.”	<i>subhāna-ka 'llāhumma wa bi-ḥamdi-ka wa tabāraka 'smu-ka wa ta'ālā jaddu-ka wa lā ilāha ghairu-k.</i>
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—he must be aware that he is addressing One who is hearing him, attending to him, and watching him, and from Whom nothing is hidden, not even the position of a single hair, nor the slightest movement made by any limb or organ of his body.

The same must hold true when he says [in his recitation of *al-Fātiḥa*, the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān]:

You alone do we worship, and of You alone do we seek help. Guide us in the straight path. (1:4,5)	<i>iyyā-ka na'budu wa iyyā-ka nastā'in— ihdina 'ṣ-ṣirāṭa 'l-mustaqīm.</i>
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—for he must grasp the meaning of what he is saying, and realize to Whom he is addressing this recitation.

At the same time, the worshipper must not forget to maintain an attitude of humility, and to be constantly on his guard against fits of absentmindedness, which could make him lose track of the stage he has reached in the performance of his prayer.

In his recitation of *al-Fātiḥa*, he must be careful to observe the eleven instances where an intensified pronunciation [*tashdīd*]²⁴² is required,²⁴³ namely:

1,2. –*ll*– and –*bb*– in the first verse [*āya*]:

<i>al-ḥamdu li'LLāhi</i>	Praise be to Allāh,
<i>raBBi 'l-'ālamīn.</i>	Lord of All the Worlds,

²⁴² As a term of Arabic grammar, *tashdīd* denotes the doubling of a consonant, the occurrence of which is indicated (in some texts, especially that of the Qur'ān) by a special superscript mark. The intensified pronunciation of doubled consonants comes naturally to the native speakers of certain languages, notably Italian, but not to many others, including those whose mother tongue is English!

²⁴³ The recitation of *al-Fātiḥa* is preceded by the invocation [*basmala*]: “*Bismi 'llāhi 'r-Raḥmāni 'r-Raḥīm* [In the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate].” This is not counted, however, as one of its verses [*āyāt*], the first of which is therefore:

Praise be to Allāh, Lord of All the Worlds.	<i>al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn.</i>
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3,4. – r-r – twice in the second verse [āya]:

aR-Rahmāni 'R-Rahīm. the All-Merciful,
the All-Compassionate,

5. – d-d – in the third verse [āya]:

māliki yawmi 'D-Dīn. Master of the Day of Reckoning.

6,7. – yy – twice in the fourth verse [āya]:

iYYā-ka na'budu You alone do we worship,
wa iYYā-ka nasta'in. and of You alone
do we seek help.

8. – ṣ-ṣ – in the fifth verse [āya]:

ihdīna 'Ṣ-Ṣirāṭa 'l-mustaqīm. Guide us in the straight path,

9. – ll – in the sixth verse [āya]:

ṣirāṭa 'LLadhīna an'amta 'alai-him. the path of those whom You have
blessed,

10,11. – d-d – and – ll – in the seventh and final verse [āya]:

ghairi 'l-maghḍūbi 'alai-him not of those who earn Your wrath,
wa la 'D-DāLLīn. nor of those who go astray.

The worshipper must also be very careful to avoid any mispronunciation or grammatical mistake [*lahn*] that would alter the meaning, because the recitation of *al-Fātiḥa* is an obligatory requirement [*farīḍa*]. It is a basic essential [*rukṇ*],²⁴⁴ by the omission of which the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is rendered null and void.

In all of this, the worshipper should feel as if he is standing on the Narrow Bridge [*Ṣirāṭ*], with the Garden of Paradise and its blissful attributes to his right, and the Fire of Hell and its terrible contents to his left. He should regard himself as making an application, by offering his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], for what Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has promised, which is the reward of the Garden of Paradise, provided that his prayer [*ṣalāt*] meets all the standards of validity. He should also have the feeling that he is presenting it in order to obtain immunity from Allāh's threat, which is the torment of the Fire of Hell. All of this

²⁴⁴ As explained by Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in an earlier Chapter of the present work:

The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] has some elements that are basic essentials [*arkān*, plural of *rukṇ*], some that are necessities [*wājibāt*], others that are recommended practices [*masnūnāt*], and yet others that are formal refinements [*hai'āt*]. (See Vol. 1, pp. 13–16.)

should be infused with a sense of certainty from his heart, and a present awareness on the part of his conscious understanding.

Furthermore, the worshipper should be firmly convinced that he is performing the prayer as a consignor [*yūṣallī ṣalāt mūdi'*], that his consignment will undoubtedly be delivered to Allāh (Exalted is He) for His review, and that the only credit he gets for it will be whatever, in the sight of Allāh, he is entitled to receive.

Next, after he has completed his recitation of *al-Fātiḥa*, the worshipper should go on to recite as many complete Sūras of the Qur'ān as he can easily manage.²⁴⁵ It is better to recite Sūras from beginning to end, rather than their final or middle sections.

He should listen carefully to what he is reciting, and try to grasp the meaning of the words he is uttering and pronouncing. Likewise, if he is being led [*ma'mūm*], he should listen carefully to the recitation of the prayer leader [*imām*] and try to understand its meaning. He should take note of the exhortations and admonitions it contains, and resolve to carry out its commandments and comply with its prohibitions. His attention to these points should be maintained until the end of the Sūra is reached.

Having completed the Qur'ānic recitation, the worshipper must stand still and keep silent, long enough to catch his breath, before he proceeds to adopt the bowing posture [*qabla an yarka'a*].²⁴⁶ He must not combine his Qur'ānic recitation uninterruptedly with the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness that precedes the adoption of the bowing posture [*takbīrat ar-rukū'*].

Then, after this brief pause for breath, the worshipper must say:

Allāh is Supremely Great!

Allāhu Akbar!

—while raising his hands to the lobes of his ears, or to a position

²⁴⁵ In the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

Therefore recite of the Qur'ān
that which is easy for you. (73:20)

*fa'qra'ū mā tayassara
mina'l-Qurān.*

²⁴⁶ The basic verb *rak'a* (of which *yarka'a* is a subjunctive form) is derived from the same three-consonant root <r-k-ʿ> as the noun *rukū'* [bowing; the bowing posture]. The term *rak'a* [an act of bowing] which is also derived from this root, has acquired an extended meaning, since it is generally used to denote the whole series of movements and postures—including the *rukū'*—that constitute one cycle of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. (The dual and plural forms, corresponding to the singular form *rak'a*, are *rak'atān/-āin* and *raka'āt*, respectively.)

level with his shoulders. (We have given a detailed description of this in the early part of this book.)²⁴⁷

As soon as the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*]²⁴⁸ has been accomplished, the worshipper must lower his hands. Then he must bend down from his upright stance [*qiyām*] in order to perform the act of bowing [*rukū'*].

The palms of his hands must now be cupped over his knees, while his fingers are slightly separated. He should support his weight by leaning on the full length of his arms [lit., on his upper arms and his forearms]. He must keep his back straight, neither raising his head, nor tilting it so low that it causes him to lose his balance.

According to one traditional account:

When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the act of bowing [*raka'a*], if there had been a drop [*qatrah*] of water on his back, it would not have moved from its place.

In a slightly different version, the wording is:

When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed the act of bowing [*raka'a*], if there had been a glass [*qadah*] of water on his back, it would not have moved from its place.

That was because he kept his back so perfectly straight and level (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

While he is holding this posture, the worshipper must say, three times:

Glory to my Lord, the Almighty! *Subhāna Rabbiya 'l-'Azīm.*

A threefold repetition is actually the minimum of perfection, for, as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said: "The most complete glorification [*tasbīḥ*] is seven repetitions, the average is five, and the minimum is three."

²⁴⁷ See note 241 on p. 177 above.

²⁴⁸ In this instance, the verbal noun *takbīr* is used without the termination *-al-at*, which is added when a single instance of this affirmation is specified, e.g., *takbīra wāḥida* [one affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness], or when the term is grammatically linked to a qualifying noun, e.g., *takbīrat ar-rukū'* [the-affirmation-of-Allāh's-Supreme-Greatness-of-the-bowing-posture] and *takbīrat al-ihrām* [the-affirmation-of-Allāh's-Supreme-Greatness-of-the-initial-consecration].

The worshipper must then raise his head [and his hands as before], saying [*musammi'an*]:²⁴⁹

May Allāh hear and accept	<i>sami'a'llāhu</i>
the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>

Then, having resumed an upright posture, he must stand calmly composed [*yaṭma'innu*], allowing his hands to hang freely by his sides.²⁵⁰

Next, the worshipper must sink down into the posture of prostration [*sujūd*]. He must place his knees on the ground first of all, then his hands, then his forehead and his nose. He must settle himself firmly on the ground, and maintain a state of calm composure [*yaṭma'innu*] in his prostration [*sujūd*]. He must align himself so that he is pointing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba] with every member and part of his body.

From the following tradition [*ḥadīth*], we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

I have been commanded to perform the act of prostration [*sujūd*] by resting on seven bones.²⁵¹

In the words of another tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

The servant [of the Lord] is supposed to prostrate himself [*yasjudu*] by resting on seven members of his body, so if he leaves any one of those members out of the act, that member will curse him.

In his posture of prostration [*sujūd*], the worshipper should be neatly compact, not sprawled out over the ground. Far from spreading his forearms wide, he must place his fingers on the ground in the same position, relative to his ears or his shoulders, as the one recommended when the hands are raised in the upright posture [*qiyām*], in conjunction

²⁴⁹ In the Arabic text, the participle *musammi'an* is sufficient, all by itself, to signify: "saying: 'sami'a'llāhu li-man ḥamidah [May Allāh hear and accept the praise of one who praises Him!]" (Like the verb *sami'a*, it is derived from the three-consonant root *s-m-'*.)

²⁵⁰ At this point, as Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has mentioned in Vol. 1, p. 14, it is necessary—though not absolutely essential—for the worshipper to utter a declaration of praise [*tahmīd*], by saying:

Our Lord, and to You be the praise!	<i>Rabba-nā wa la-ka'l-ḥamd.</i>
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The worshipper is also recommended, as a customary practice, to add the words:

Enough [praise] to fill the heavens and the earth,	<i>mil'u 's-samāwāti wa mil'u 'l-arḍ:</i>
and to fill anything beyond them, as You wish.	<i>wa mil'u mā shi'ta min shai'in ba'd.</i>

²⁵¹ That is to say: (1) the skull bone in the forehead, (2,3) the bones in the two hands, (4,5) the two kneecaps, and (6,7) the bones in the two feet.

with the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*]. He must not place his hands in line with top of his head.

He must keep his fingers close together, and point them toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba]. As we have previously explained,²⁵² he must keep his upper arms well clear of the sides of his body, his thighs from touching the calves of his legs, and his stomach from coming in contact with the ground.

While he is in the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], the worshipper must say:

Glory to my Lord, the Most High! *Subhāna Rabbiya 'l-A'ālā.*

He should utter this glorification three times, as in the posture of bowing [*rukū'*].

Then he must raise his head, saying [*mukabbīran*]:²⁵³

Allāh is Supremely Great! *Allāhu Akbar!*

He must now sit on his left leg, while placing his right leg so that the right foot is in an upright position [i.e., with the heel raised], and so that his toes are pointing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba]. While sitting in this posture, he must say:

My Lord, forgive me! *Rabbi 'ghfir lī*

He should say this three times, while glancing at his breast.

Next, he must prostrate himself [*yasjudu*] a second time, in the same manner as before. Then he must raise his head from the ground, saying [*mukabbīran*]:

Allāh is Supremely Great! *Allāhu Akbar!*

Then he must raise his hands from the ground, and then his knees, relying on his knees to lift his weight. As he rises to stand on the soles of his feet, he should not put one foot ahead of the other, for that is considered reprehensible. It has even been said that it cuts off the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and there is a traditional report to that effect, transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

²⁵² See the list of forty-five bad habits, on pp. 169–73 above.

²⁵³ In the Arabic text, the participle *mukabbīran* is sufficient, all by itself, to signify: "saying: 'Allāhu Akbar [Allāh is Supremely Great!]" Like the superlative adjective *akbar*, the verb *kabbara*, and the verbal noun *takbīr*, it is derived from the three-consonant root *k-b-r*.

The worshipper must now perform the second cycle [*rak'ā*] in the same manner as the first, until [after the second prostration] he adopts a sitting posture, in order to perform the first testimony [*at-tashahhud al-awwal*]. He must sit on his left leg, while placing his right leg so that the right foot is in an upright position [i.e., with the heel raised], and so that his toes are pointing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba]. He must place his left hand on his left thigh, and his right hand on his right thigh.

While pointing with the finger next to the thumb, i.e., the index finger [*sabbāba*] [of his right hand], he should join the thumb [*ibhām*] and the middle finger [*wuṣṭā*] to form a circle, and hold the little finger [*khinṣir*] and the ring finger [*binṣir*] in the grip of his hand. He must keep a watchful eye on his finger from the beginning of his testimony [*tashahhud*] to the end, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

When one of you is in the sitting posture, in the course of performing the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he must not fiddle with anything, for he is engaged in intimate converse with his Lord [*yunājī Rabba-hu*]. He must place his left hand on his left thigh, and his right hand on his right thigh, then focus his heart and his eyes on his finger, for it can serve as a swatter to whisk away the Devil [*midhabba li' sh-Shaiṭān*].

The worshipper must now perform the testimony [*tashahhud*], by saying:

Greetings, prayers and good deeds are due to Allāh.	<i>at-tahīyyātu li'llāhi wa 'ṣ-ṣalawātu wa 't-tayyibāt—</i>
Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh and His blessings!	<i>as-salāmu 'alai-ka ayyuha 'n-nabiyyu wa raḥmatu'llāhi wa barakātuh—</i>
Peace be on us, and on all the righteous servants of Allāh.	<i>as-salāmu 'alai-nā wa 'alā 'ibādi'llāhi 'ṣ-ṣāliḥim.</i>
I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger.	<i>ashhadu an lā ilāha illa'llāh— wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan 'abdu-hu wa rasūluh.</i>

Next, the worshipper must stand up,²⁵⁴ saying [*mukabbiran*]:

Allāh is Supremely Great!	<i>Allāhu Akbar.</i>
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²⁵⁴ That is to say, in order to perform the third cycle [*rak'ā*].

He must recite *al-Fātiḥa* only, with no additional Qurʾānic recitation, and then go on to perform the acts of bowing [*rukūʿ*] and prostration [*sujūd*], in the same manner as before.

The worshipper must then perform the fourth cycle [*rakʿa*] in the same manner as the third [i.e., reciting *al-Fātiḥa* only]. Then he must adopt the sitting posture in order to perform the testimony [*tashahhud*], which he must carry out in the manner we have described above. This time, however, when he reaches the words:

His servant and His Messenger. *ʿabdu-hu wa rasūluh.*

—he must go on to say:

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
and the family of Muḥammad,
as You have blessed Abraham!

*Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammadin
wa ʿalā āli Muḥammadin
ka-mā ṣallaita ʿalā Ibrāhīm.*

Surely You deserve
to be praised and extolled!

*inna-ka
Ḥamidum Majīd.*

And bestow Your grace
upon Muḥammad, and upon
the family of Muḥammad,
as You have bestowed Your grace
upon Abraham!

*wa bārik
ʿalā Muḥammadin
wa ʿalā āli Muḥammadin
ka-mā bārakta
ʿalā Ibrāhīm.*

Surely You deserve
to be praised and extolled!

*inna-ka
Ḥamidum Majīd.*

According to another account of the doctrine of our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal], the mention of Abraham [*Ibrāhīm*] should be followed by a reference to his family, so the worshipper must say:

as You have blessed Abraham,
and the family of Abraham.

*ka-mā ṣallaita ʿalā Ibrāhīma
wa ʿalā āli Ibrāhīm.*

—and:

as You have bestowed Your grace
upon Abraham,
and the upon family of Abraham.

*ka-mā bārakta
ʿalā Ibrāhīm.
wa ʿalā āli Ibrāhīm.*

At this point, which marks the conclusion of the testimony [*tashahhud*], the worshipper is recommended to seek refuge from four perils. He should therefore say:

O Allāh, I take refuge with You
from the torment of Hell,
and from the torment of the grave,

*Allāhumma innī aʿūdhu bi-ka
min ʿadhābi jahannam:
wa min ʿadhābi l-qabr:*

and from the mischief
of the False Messiah,
and from the mischief
of life and death.

*wa min fitnati 'l-
masīhi 'd-dajjāl:
wa min fitnati 'l-mahyā
wa 'l-mamāt.*

He should then offer the following supplications:

O Allāh, I beg You to grant me
all that is good, both what I know
of it and that which I do not know,

*Allāhumma innī as' alu-ka 'l-khaira
ulla-hu mā 'alimtu min-hu
wa mā lam a' lam.*

and I take refuge with You from all
that is evil, both what I know of it
and that which I do not know.

*wa a'ūdhu bi-ka mina 'sh-sharri
kulli-hi mā 'alimtu min-hu
wa mā lam a' lam.*

O Allāh, I beg You to grant me
the goodness of that which Your
righteous servants have asked of You,

*Allāhumma innī as' alu-ka
min khairi mā sa' ala-ka
'ibādu-ka 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn.*

and I take refuge with You from
the evil of that from which Your
righteous servants have sought
refuge with You.

*wa a'ūdhu bi-ka
min sharri
ma 'sta'ādha bi-ka minhu
'ibādu-ka 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn.*

O Allāh, I beg You to grant me
the Garden of Paradise, and whatever
brings one close to it,
by word and by deed.

*Allāhumma innī
as' alu-ka 'l-jannata wa mā
qarraba ilai-hā
min qawlin wa 'amal.*

Our Lord, give us
in this world good,
and good in the hereafter, and
guard us against the torment
of the Fire [of Hell]! (2:201)

*Rabba-nā āti-nā
fi 'd-dunyā ḥasanatan
wa fi 'l-ākhirati ḥasanatan
wa qinā
'adhāba 'n-nār.*

Our Lord, forgive us
our sins, and
grant us remission for our evil deeds,
and let us end our earthly lives
in the company of the righteous.

*Rabba-nā fa-'ghfir
la-nā dhunūba-nā
wa kaffir 'an-nā sayyi' āti-nā
wa tawaffa-nā
ma'a 'l-abrār.*

Our Lord, give us that
which You have promised us
through Your Messengers,
and do not put us to shame
on the Day of Resurrection.
Surely You will not fail
to keep the trust! (3:194)

*Rabba-nā wa āti-nā
mā wa'adta-nā
'alā Rusuli-ka
wa lā tukhzi-nā
yawma 'l-qiyāmah:
inna-ka
lā tukhlifu 'l-mī'ād.*

If the worshipper wishes to add further supplications to these, it is permissible for him to do so, unless he is acting as a prayer leader [*imām*], in which case it would make the proceedings unduly lengthy for those

who are following his lead [*ma' mūmīn*]. For one who is leading others in prayer, brevity is the recommended practice [*mustahabb*], out of consideration for their feelings, and because there may be someone amongst them who has a pressing need to attend to.

The worshipper must then conclude the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] by performing the salutation [*taslīma*],²⁵⁵ after which he should offer supplications for his own sake, for the sake of his parents, and on behalf of all the Muslims.

At every stage in all of this, the worshipper must be timidly apprehensive about its ultimate outcome, wondering how his prayer may be received in the sight of Allāh (Exalted is He), the One who summons us to it, the One who commands us to perform it, the One who rewards us for it [if it is acceptable], and the One who punishes us for it, if it is done badly. So, when he finally emerges from the process, he should undertake a conscious review of his performance. Then, if he can honestly give it a clearance and a clean bill of health, he must offer grateful praise to Allāh (Exalted is He), since He is the One who made him capable of such an achievement. If, on the other hand, he finds it marred by deficiency and imperfection, he must repent to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) and seek Allāh's forgiveness. He must prepare himself to do better, and make a serious effort to be more careful in future.

There is a clear indication to prove that a ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] has been accepted, and an equally clear indication to prove that it has been rejected. The sure sign of its acceptance is that it has been effective in deterring and preventing its owner from indulging in immoral behavior and reprehensible conduct, while encouraging him to do better, renewing his intention to strive after righteousness, increasing his acts of worshipful obedience, his charitable deeds, his eagerness for spiritual rewards, his resistance to bad influences, and his disapproval of sinful acts of disobedience and misconduct. For, as Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

The ritual prayer helps to prevent indecency and reprehensible behavior. The remembrance of Allāh is greater; and Allāh knows the things you do. (29:45)

*inna 'ṣ-ṣalāta tanhā
'ani 'l-faḥṣhā'i wa 'l-munkar:
wa la-dhikru 'llāhi akbar:
wa 'llāhu ya'lamu mā taṣna'ūn.*

²⁵⁵ In other words, he must turn his head to the right and say:

Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh. *as-salāmu 'alaikum wa rahmatu'llāh.*

—then turn his head to the left and repeat these same words.

Our treatment of this subject is equally applicable to the prayer leader [*imām*], the worshipper who follows his lead [*ma'mūm*], and the worshipper who prays by himself [*munfarid*].

As for the essential prerequisites of the ritual prayer [*sharā'it aṣ-ṣalāt*], its necessary elements [*wājibāt*], and its customarily recommended practices [*masnūnāt*], we have provided a detailed account of these in the first part of this book.²⁵⁶

Allāh is the One who enables us to do what is right and proper [*al-Muwaffiq li'ṣ-ṣawāb*].



²⁵⁶ See Vol. 1, pp. 13–16.

24. Concerning the qualifications and responsibilities of the prayer leader [*imām*].

It is not appropriate for a man to act as a prayer leader [*imām*] unless or until he possesses all the attributes we are about to mention, namely:

1. He should not be keen to put himself forward, as long as he can find someone sufficiently qualified to spare him from having to do so, and on no account should he put himself forward in the presence of someone better qualified than he.

This is most important, because, as we know from the tradition [*ḥadīth*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

If a man leads [*amma*] the people in prayer, when there is someone better qualified in the congregation behind him, they will suffer constant ignominy.

[The Caliph] ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once said:

“That I should charge to the battlefield and get my head cut off, without incurring any sin thereby, would be far better than putting myself forward to lead a congregation that included Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth [*aṣ-Ṣiddīq*], (may Allāh be well pleased with him).”

2. He must be a competent reciter [*qārī’*] of the Book of Allāh, a trained expert [*faqīh*] in the religion [*dīn*] of Allāh, and a proficient student of the exemplary practice [*sunna*] of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), because the latter said, as reported in the tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

Entrust the oversight of your religion to your experts in Islāmic jurisprudence [*fuqahā’*], and let your prayer leaders [*a’imma*] be the Qur’ān-reciters [*qurrā’*] among you.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

Those who lead you in prayer are your finest élite [*ya’ummu-kum khiyāru-kum*], for they are your ambassadorial delegates [*wufūd*] to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

By according them this special accolade, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was simply drawing attention to the fact that they are people distinguished by religious faith and virtue, knowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and fear of Allāh (Exalted is He), who are concerned not only with their own prayer [*ṣalāt*], but also with the prayer performed by those behind them. They are keenly aware of the responsibility they must bear, both for themselves and for those behind them, if they are guilty of any impropriety in their performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

When he mentioned the Qurʾān-reciters [*qurrāʾ*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was not referring to those who have merely memorized the text of the Qurʾān, without putting it into practice. What he meant to emphasize (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was the importance of acting on the message of the Qurʾān, as well as learning it by heart. As we are told in the tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

The person most worthy of this Qurʾān is someone who puts it into practice, even if he does not read it.

It is quite possible for the Qurʾān to be memorized by someone who fails to put it into practice, and who makes not the slightest effort to abide by the rules it lays down, neither implementing the prescriptions enjoined upon him by Allāh, nor observing the prohibitions He has imposed upon him. We are not interested in such a person, and he deserves no respect. Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

A person can hardly believe in the Qurʾān, if he considers it permissible to do the things it has declared unlawful.

It is not permissible, therefore, for people to set anyone in front of them in their ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], as a leader [*imām*], other than the individual amongst them who knows Allāh best, and fears him the most. If they go against this instruction, and appoint someone less qualified, they will suffer constant ignominy, backwardness and deficiency in their religion, and remoteness from Allāh (Exalted is He), from His good pleasure [*riḍwān*],²⁵⁷ and from His Garden of Paradise.

²⁵⁷ As an ordinary noun, the Arabic word *riḍwān* means "approval; consent; good pleasure." In the standard works of reference, the angel called *Riḍwān* is variously described as the porter, the gardener, the doorkeeper, the keeper, the guardian, the treasurer, or the custodian of Paradise.

May Allāh bestow His mercy upon any group of people who take a serious interest in their religion [*dīn*] and their ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*], so that they appoint their finest élite [*khiyār*] to lead them. In so doing, they will be following the exemplary practice [*sunna*] of their Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and thereby seeking nearness to their Lord (Blessed and Exalted is He).

3. It is also important that the prayer leader [*imām*] should be someone who is careful to guard his tongue from responding, when people engage in faultfinding and backbiting at his expense, unless he has something good to say.

4. He must not only enjoin what is right and fair [*maʿrūf*], but also practice it himself, and he must not only forbid what is wrong and unfair [*munkar*], but also avoid committing it himself.²⁵⁸

5. He must love goodness and those who practice it, and he must hate evil and those who practice it.

6. He must be thoroughly familiar with the exact times prescribed for the ritual prayer [*mawāqīt aṣ-ṣalāt*], and meticulous in observing them.

7. He must fully appreciate the significance and the serious importance of his rôle.

8. He must be chaste with regard to his stomach and his sexual organs [*ʿaṭf al-baṭn wa ʿl-farj*], and keep his hand withdrawn from contact with things that are unlawful [*maḥārim*].

9. He must expend little energy for any purpose other than seeking to obtain the approval of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He).

10. He must be mild-tempered, long-suffering, and patient in the face of injury and insult. This means that he must turn a blind eye to mischievous provocation, be tolerant of those who speak ill of him, be patient with those who treat him foolishly, and behave well toward those who behave badly toward him.

11. He must beware of taking a prurient interest in things that are unlawful [*maḥārim*]. If he sees that a private part [*ʿawra*] is exposed to view, he must cover it up, and if he happens to notice something shameful, he must conceal it.

²⁵⁸ Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted an entire Chapter, earlier in the present work, to the duty to enjoin what is what is right and fair and to forbid what is wrong and unfair [*al-amr biʿl-maʿrūf wa ʿn-nahy ʿani ʿl-munkar*]. (See Vol. 1, pp. 151–70.)

12. He must shun altercation with ignorant fools, and respond to their nonsense by saying: “O Allāh, let there be peace! [*Allāhumma salāmā*].”²⁵⁹

13. While other people should find him to be a reassuring source of comfort, his feeling about himself must be one of grave concern, as he yearns for deliverance and strives for his personal salvation.

14. He must acknowledge that he is being put to the test, recognize the magnitude of the challenge he faces, and understand the momentous significance and enormous importance of the task assigned to him. His overriding concern must therefore be to discharge the solemn responsibility laid upon him, by proving himself worthy of the great dignity of the prayer leader’s rôle [*imāma*], its tremendous value, and its beneficial quality.

15. He must be a man of few words, except when he needs to speak about matters relating to his sphere of interest.

16. [He must be aware that] there is a state of being [*hāl*] that is appropriate for him [as prayer leader], and a state of being that is appropriate for the people [who follow his lead].

17. When he stands in his prayer-niche [*mihṛāb*], he must realize that he is standing in the station of the Prophets [*maqām an-Nabiyyīn*] and of the Caliph of the Chief of the Messengers [*Khalīfa Sayyid al-Mursalīn*], and that he is communing with the Lord of All the Worlds [*yunājī Rabb al-‘Ālamīn*].

18. He must exercise his independent judgment [*ijtihād*],²⁶⁰ in order to ensure the complete performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and also to ensure the well-being of those behind him, meaning those who are following his leadership [*imāma*].

19. He must keep the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] as short and simple as possible, without prejudice to its completeness.

20. He must conduct the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] in a way that accommodates the weakest member of the congregation. This means that he must regard himself as inferior to those who pray behind him, recognizing that their leadership [*imāma*] has been assigned to him as a test, and realizing that Allāh (Exalted is He) will hold him responsible for the performance of the obligatory duties [*farā’id*], not just on his own account, but also on that of the weakest member of the congregation.

²⁵⁹ This is a clear allusion to Q. 25:63.

²⁶⁰ See note 177 on p. 132 above.

21. When putting himself forward to lead the congregation, he should do so as one who is tearfully lamenting his mistakes, feeling remorse for his previous negligence and his former sins, and regretting his lost opportunities.

22. He must not adopt a proud and haughty attitude toward those who pray behind him, nor assume an air of superiority over those to whom he is actually subordinate.

23. He must not become a fanatical champion of his own cause, when comments are made about his positive qualities and his shortcomings. He should neither like it when people praise him, nor dislike it when they blame him. His attitude toward the congregation should be the same in either case.

24. He must be someone to whom no falsehood can be imputed.

25. He must be well-mannered in his eating habits.

26. He must be someone who keeps his clothes clean and tidy.

27. He must be modest in his style of dressing, and unassuming in the way he sits in company.

28. He must not be someone who has been punished [*maḥdūd*] for a serious offense against the law of Islām.²⁶¹

29. He must not be the kind of person who arouses misgivings in people.

30. He must not be the kind of person who would denounce his brother to the political authority [*sultān*].

31. He must not be someone who divulges people's secrets. (That is to say, he must not be someone who broadcasts them.)

32. He must not be someone who goes looking for the worst in people.

33. He must not be the kind of person who harbors feelings of hatred and resentment toward his brother.

34. He must not be the kind of person who would cheat in his management of funds entrusted to him, in his commercial dealings, or in the repayment of a loan.

35. He must not put himself forward [to lead the prayer] as long as his diet and his means of livelihood are unclean.

36. He must not put himself forward as long as he feels a craving to occupy the prayer leader's position [*imāma*].

37. He must not put himself forward as long as he recognizes that he

²⁶¹ The term *maḥdūd* is applied to a person who has suffered the penalty [*ḥadd*] prescribed by Islāmic law for one of the offenses listed in note 228 on p. 166 above.

still harbors some feeling of envy, or resentment, or malice, or hatred, or spite, or grievance, or vindictiveness.

38. He must not be seeking blood revenge [*tha'ar*].

39. He must not be trying to win support for himself.

40. He must not be trying to satisfy a grudge.

41. He must not be chasing the wife of a Muslim.

42. He must not be cheating anyone belonging to the Community of Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

43. He must not talk about a seditious conspiracy [*fitna*], and he must neither get involved in it nor do anything to encourage it.

44. Far from engaging in such negative activity, he must positively assist the upholders of the truth [*ahl al-ḥaqq*] against the supporters of falsehood [*ahl al-bāṭil*], with his hand, his tongue and his heart.

45. He must always speak the truth, even if it is bitter.

46. He must not be affected, in his commitment to Allāh, by criticism from any quarter.

47. He should neither like it when people praise him, nor dislike it when they blame him.

48. When offering the supplication [*du'ā'*], immediately after the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] in which he has led the congregation, he should not make any request for himself in particular. He should rather couch the supplication in general terms, applicable to them as well as to himself, for it would amount to a breach of trust on his part, if he were to single himself out at their expense.

49. He should not accord preferential respect to certain members of the congregation over others,²⁶² except to those who are endowed with knowledge and understanding. As the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Let those who follow me closely [in the ritual prayer] be persons endowed with understanding and restraint [*ulu' l-aḥlām wa 'n-naḥy*].

They should be treated with the same respect by those who line up next to them behind the leader's back.

50. He must not invite the rich man to move close to him, while treating the poor man with disdain.

51. It is not appropriate for him to step forward to lead a congregation that includes people who disapprove of his leadership [*imāma*]. If there

²⁶² That is to say, by inviting them to occupy the positions immediately behind him, in front of the rest of the congregation.

are some amongst them who disapprove of him, and some who do not disapprove of him, he must investigate the situation thoroughly. Then, if he discovers that those who disapprove of him are in the majority, he must vacate the prayer-niche [*miḥrāb*] and decline to approach it again.

This only applies if their disapproval of him is based on sound knowledge and a true assessment of his character. If it is due to ignorance, falsehood and stupidity, or to fanatical adherence to a particular doctrine [*‘aṣaba li-madhhab*], or to some heretical tendency [*hawā*], he should pay no attention to their disapproval. If such is the case, he should not refrain from leading them in the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], unless he has reason to fear that an outbreak of public disorder could be sparked by his failure to withdraw. Under these circumstances, he should step aside and vacate the prayer-niche [*miḥrāb*], until such time as the people have become reconciled with one another, and are content to accept his leadership.

52. He must not be the kind of person who is always getting into arguments, or who is constantly swearing and cursing.

53. He must not be someone who finds pretexts for dabbling in matters that are unsavory and highly suspect.

56. He must not be on intimate terms, or engage in social intercourse, with people other than the righteous [*ṣāliḥīn*].

57. It is not appropriate for him to serve as a prayer leader [*imām*] as long as he is still has a fondness for mischievous intrigue [*fitna*] and those who practice it, and even worse, for sinful disobedience [*ma‘ṣiya*] and those who practice it, and for political leadership [*riyāsa*] and those who are interested in pursuing it.

58. In order to qualify, he must be very patient in coping with the injuries and insults people can inflict, lovingly disposed toward them, eager to secure their welfare, and dedicated to providing them with constructive advice.

59. He must not quarrel over the position of prayer leader [*imāma*], and he certainly must not come to blows over it, with someone who is just as well qualified to carry out the task.

As we know from traditional reports concerning the great figures of the past, our righteous forebears had a strong aversion to assuming the prayer leader's rôle [*imāma*], so much so that they would put forward

some who was less than their equal in nobility and religious stature, in their eagerness to offload the burden and obtain relief, and from fear of incurring the liability for some shortcoming.

60. When an officer of the government [*dhū sulṭān*] is present in his company, it is not appropriate for the usual prayer leader [*imām*] to put himself out in front of him in the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], except with his permission. By the same token, he should not sit down in the presence of such a person, except with his permission.

61. If he stays for some time in a village, or a way station, or an encampment belonging to a clan [*qabīla*] or tribe of the Arabs of the desert [*ḥayy min aḥyā' al-'Arab*], he must not act as their prayer leader [*lā ya'ummu-hum*] without their permission. By the same token, if he happens to find himself in the company of people in a caravan, a group of travelers who represent a potential congregation, he must not take it upon himself to act as their prayer leader [*lā ya'ummu-hum*] without their permission.

62. Far from prolonging the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], the prayer leader [*imām*] is under an obligation to keep it as short as possible, without detriment to its essential completeness. If this needs any further explanation, we have only to cite the following traditional reports:

According to Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Whenever one of you is acting as a prayer leader [*imām*], he should keep it short and easy, for standing behind him are the young and the old, and those who have pressing needs. When he is performing the ritual prayer on his own behalf, that is when he may prolong it as much as he wishes.

Abū Wāqid (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

“Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was one of the speediest of them all when it came to leading the people in the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and the most long-drawn-out of them all when it came to his personal performance.”



25.

Concerning the intention [*niyya*] of the prayer leader [*imām*], his instructions to the congregation, and how he ought to station himself in the prayer-niche [*miḥrāb*].

The prayer leader [*imām*] must not embark upon the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], nor should he pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*lā yukabbir*],²⁶³ until he has made the intention, at least with his heart, to carry out the task of leadership [*imāma*]. If he also expresses his intention with his tongue, so much the better.

[Before starting the prayer] he should turn and look to right and left, for he must make sure that the worshippers are lined up in perfectly straight rows. He should then say:

Hold yourselves erect!	<i>istaqīmū</i>
May Allāh bestow His mercy upon you!	<i>yarḥamu-kumu 'llāh.</i>
Straighten your ranks!	<i>i' tadilū</i>
May Allāh be well pleased with you!	<i>raḍiya 'llāhu 'an-kum.</i>

He should instruct them to fill the gaps in their ranks, to hold their shoulders in an even line, and to move closer to one another until their shoulders are actually touching. This is very important, because any crookedness of the shoulders and unevenness of the ranks will represent a diminution of the value of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and will provide an opportunity for the devils [*shayāṭīm*] to come and stand alongside the people in the rows. As we learn from the tradition [*ḥadīth*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

Align the rows tightly, keep the shoulders straight, and fill the gaps, so as to leave no space for the likes of the offspring of the *ḥadhaf*²⁶⁴ to stand between you.

²⁶³ That is to say, [until he has formulated his intention...] he should not utter the *takbīra*, meaning the affirmation: "Allāhu Akbar [Allāh is Supremely Great!]," which is pronounced as an act of consecration [*iḥrām*] at the beginning of the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

²⁶⁴ According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *ḥadhaf* is applied to small, black sheep or goats, with short and fine wool or hair, without tails and without ears; or to the young ones of sheep or goats, in general; or, metaphorically, to various other creatures. (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. Ḥ-DH-F.)

That is to say, the likes of the offspring of sheep and goats [*ghanam*], meaning the devils [*shayātīn*].

According to one traditional report:

“When the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) stood ready to lead the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he would not pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*lam yukabbir*] until he had turned and looked to right and left. He would instruct the members of the congregation to hold their shoulders in an even line, and he would say: ‘Do not stand at odds, for then your hearts will be at odds!’”

According to another traditional report:

“One day, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) noticed that a man was holding himself in such a way that his chest was sticking out from the row in which he was standing, so he said: ‘All of you had better hold your shoulders in an even line, otherwise Allāh (Exalted is He) will surely cause your hearts to be out of harmony.’”

The following traditional report is one of those accepted as authentic by both Imām Muslim and Imām al-Bukhārī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon them).²⁶⁵ It informs us that Sālim ibn Abi ’l-Ja’d (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once heard an-Nu’mān ibn Bashīr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) say that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to say:

You had better straighten your ranks, otherwise Allāh (Exalted is He) will surely cause your faces to be out of harmony.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Qatāda (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) from Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the latter stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

You must keep your ranks straight, for the straightness of the ranks is part of what makes the ritual prayer complete [*taswiyat aṣ-ṣufūf min tamām aṣ-ṣalāt*].

In the case of [the Caliph] ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), it is reported that, whenever he acted in the capacity of prayer leader [*imām*], he would not pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*kāna lā yukabbiru*] until a man, to whom he

²⁶⁵ These are the compilers of the two most famous collections of Prophetic traditions, under the titles *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. (The term *ṣaḥīḥ* means “correct; authentic.”)

had assigned the task of drawing up the ranks, came and informed him that they had been properly aligned. Only at that point would he pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness. The same practice was later implemented by [the pious Umayyad Caliph] 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

It is related that Bilāl the Muezzin [*al-Mu'addhin*] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) had a special method of his own for persuading the members of the congregation to straighten their ranks: He used to thrash them on their Achilles' tendons [*'arāqīb*] with a kind of whip called the *dirra*, until they aligned themselves in proper order. As one of the learned scholars [*'ulamā'*] has pointed out:

“The obvious conclusion to be drawn, in considering the implications of this report, is that Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) must have followed that practice during the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), whenever he was about to make the announcement of readiness [*iqāma*],²⁶⁶ just before he [the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)] embarked on the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. It must have been during that period, because Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) did not act as muezzin [*lam yu'addhin*] for anyone after the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), except on one particular day, after his return from Syria during the time of [the Caliph] Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth [*aṣ-Ṣiddīq*], (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

“On that one occasion, he responded to the request of Abū Bakr and the other Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), for they all shared a sense of longing for Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and for his era. But when Bilāl (may Allāh be well pleased with him) reached the words:

I bear witness that Muḥammad
is the Messenger of Allāh.

*ashhadu anna
Muḥammadan Rasūlu'llāh.*

—he suddenly desisted from giving the call to prayer [*adhān*], because he was simply unable to continue with it any further. He swooned and fell down in a faint, overwhelmed by love for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and yearning for his company. At that point, the mournful lamentation of those senior citizens of Medina, the

²⁶⁶ See note 304 on p. 225 below.

Emigrés [*Muhājirūn*] and the Helpers [*Anṣār*],²⁶⁷ became extremely loud and intense, so much so that the elderly widows and spinsters [*ʿawātiq*]²⁶⁸ emerged from their private quarters, moved by a nostalgic longing for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

“It is therefore definitely established, on the basis of these historical facts, that his practice of thrashing the members of the congregation on their Achilles’ tendons [*ʿarāqīb*] was put into effect during the lifetime of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).”

It is not appropriate for the prayer leader [*imām*] to station himself inside the inner niche [*tāq*] of the *Qibla*, thereby blocking the view of it that would otherwise be available to the members of the congregation behind him. He should rather stand back from it a little way. [According to another account of his doctrine, however, our Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) maintained that it is actually commendable for the prayer leader [*imām*] to station himself inside the inner niche.]

He must not station himself on a spot that would place him on a higher level than those who are following his lead [*maʿmūmīn*]. If he does this, some experts have argued, his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] will be rendered null and void.

Once he has concluded his performance of the ritual prayer [*sallama min ṣalāti-hi*],²⁶⁹ it is not appropriate for him to linger in his niche [*miḥrāb*]. He should get up promptly and move over to his left, then perform his supererogatory devotions [*tanafful*] on that side of the niche [*miḥrāb*]. This is based on the traditional report of al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba²⁷⁰ (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who stated that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

²⁶⁷ See note 148 on p. 115 above.

²⁶⁸ The term *ʿātiq* (of which *ʿawātiq* is the plural form) is applied to a woman who is her own mistress, in the sense of having outlived her parents, and being beyond the normal age for marriage (or remarriage, in the case of a widow or divorcee). The Arabic root *ʿ-t-q* conveys the basic idea of “emancipation.” (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *ʿ-T-Q*.)

²⁶⁹ See note 255 on p. 187 above,

²⁷⁰ Al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is often referred to by the nickname Mughīrat ar-Raʿy [*“Quick-witted”*], which he acquired in recognition of his proverbial ingenuity. He claimed that he was the last man to be with the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and he used to say: “I took my ring and let it fall into the grave, then I said: ‘My ring has dropped.’ But I had actually thrown it in on purpose, so that I might touch the Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and be the last man to be with him.” At the time of his death, in A.H. 49., he held the important post of Governor of Kūfa.

The prayer leader [*imām*] must not go on to perform voluntary devotions [*lā yataʿawwaʿ*] in the place he occupies while leading the people in the prescribed prayer [*maktūba*].

In the case of the follower [*maʿmūm*], on the other hand, the equivalent of this is quite permissible. Since he is allowed the option, he may either perform his [voluntary] prayers on the same spot, if he wishes to do so, or he may choose to move back from it a little way.

The prayer leader [*imām*] must observe two moments of silent pause: (1) at the very beginning of the prayer [*iftitāḥ aṣ-ṣalāt*], and (2) when he has finished the Qurʾānic recitation [*qirāʿa*], just before he adopts the bowing posture [*qabla an yarkaʿa*], so that he may catch his breath and calm the intense vibration experienced during his recitation. He must not combine his Qurʾānic recitation uninterruptedly with the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness that precedes the adoption of the bowing posture [*takbīrat ar-rukūʿ*], because an instruction to this effect is attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in the tradition [*ḥadīth*] reported by Samura ibn Jundab (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

When he performs the prayer with a screening object in front of him [*ṣallā ilā sutra*],²⁷¹ he must position himself very close to it. If he leaves any gap at all between himself and the object used as a screen, it must not be wide enough to allow a wild black dog, or a donkey, or a woman, to pass through. Should any of these come in between, his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] will be cut off at that point, according to the doctrine of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, our Imām, (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). As far as the donkey and the woman are concerned, however, there is another account of his doctrine, according to which these two are harmless in this respect.²⁷²

²⁷¹ According to E.W. Lane (*Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. S–T–R), the predominant application of the term *sutra* [screening object] is to “a thing which a person praying sets up before him; [sticking it in the ground, or laying it down if the ground be hard, in order that no living being or image may be the object next before him;] such as a whip, and a staff having a pointed iron at its lower extremity.”

At various times, according to traditions [*ahādīth*] recorded by Imām al-Bukhārī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used a wide range of creatures and articles as *sutra* objects, including baggage-camels, horses, trees, saddles, a couch, a lance, a stick, and the pillars of a mosque.

²⁷² According to a traditional report recorded by Imām al-Bukhārī, ʿĀʿisha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) once exclaimed: “Would you place us women on the same level as donkeys and dogs? By Allāh, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] while I was lying on the couch between him and the *Qibla*.”

When the prayer leader [*imām*] adopts the bowing posture [*idhā rakaʿa*], he must utter three glorifications [*tasbīḥāt*],²⁷³ in the manner we have previously described. He must be careful not to utter them too rapidly or too soon, and they should be fully pronounced, in a calm, deliberate, and clearly audible voice. This is very important because, if he utters the glorification [*tasbīḥ*] too quickly, the people behind him will not be able to keep pace with him. This may result in a situation where the members of the congregation [*maʿmūmīn*] start to anticipate his movements. Their prayer will thus be spoiled, and he will incur the liability for their sin.

The same considerations apply when he raises his head from the bowing posture [*rukūʿ*], and says:

May Allāh hear and accept the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>samiʿa ʿllāhu</i> <i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>
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—then stands quite still in an upright posture, while he says:

Our Lord, and to You be the praise!	<i>Rabba-nā wa la-ka ʿl-ḥamd.</i>
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He must pronounce these words in an unhurried voice, so that the members of the congregation [*maʿmūmīn*] can easily keep up with him. If he goes on to add the words:

Enough [praise] to fill the heavens and the earth, and to fill anything beyond them, as You wish.	<i>milʿu ʿs-samāwāti</i> <i>wa milʿu ʿl-ard:</i> <i>wa milʿu mā shiʿta</i> <i>min shaiʿin baʿd.</i>
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—this is quite permissible, because the practice is reliably attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

“When Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) raised his head from the bowing posture [*rukūʿ*], he used to stand upright for such a long time [before making the prostration], that people would say: ‘He seems to have forgotten [what comes next].’”

In the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], and when he adopts the sitting posture [*jalsa*] between the two acts of prostration [*sajdatain*], he must

²⁷³ In other words, he must say, three times:

Glory to my Lord, the Almighty!	<i>Subḥāna Rabbiya ʿl-ʿAẓīm.</i>
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likewise hold himself still for a while, so that those behind him can keep up with him in the performance of each essential element [*rukʿn*].²⁷⁴

No serious attention need be paid to the assertion of those who say: “If he does that [i.e., if he holds his posture for a considerable length of time], someone who is supposed to be following his lead [*maʿmūm*] may anticipate his next move, and that person’s ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] will thus be rendered null and void.” The reasoning here is faulty, if we are assuming that he does that on a regular basis, because people will realize, when they notice that he does it constantly and persistently, that holding a steady posture is his normal practice. They will therefore keep pace with him, and not move prematurely.

The prayer leader [*imām*] should also be given the following advice: “It is recommended that you should instill some fear in them, before embarking on the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and that you should warn them against anticipating your movements, as we shall explain in the following subsection. Far from having a negative effect, this will be conducive to the common good, and to the completeness of everyone’s ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”

As we are informed in the words of the tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

Every performer of the ritual prayer is a shepherd, and he will be held responsible for his flock [*kullu muṣallin rāʿin wa masʿūlun ʿan raʿiyyati-hi*].

It has also been said that the prayer leader [*imām*] is a shepherd in relation to those whom he leads in the prayer.

It is therefore incumbent upon the prayer leader [*imām*] to give wise advice to those pray behind him. He must warn them against premature movement in the stages of bowing [*rukūʿ*] and prostration [*sujūd*]. He must do what he can to improve their behavior, since he is a shepherd to them now, and he will be held responsible for them tomorrow [on the Day of Resurrection].

²⁷⁴ As explained by the author (may Allāh be well pleased with him) in Vol. 1, pp. 13–14:

The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] has some elements that are essential [*arkān*, pl. of *rukʿn*], some that are necessities [*wājibāt*], some that are recommended [*masnūnāt*], and yet others that are formal refinements [*ḥaʾiʾāt*]. As for the basic essentials [*arkān*] these are fifteen in number: (1) Standing in an upright posture [*qiyām*]. (2) The consecratory declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-īhrām*]. (3) Recitation of *al-Fātiḥa*. (4) Bowing [*rukūʿ*]. (5) Calm composure in the bowing posture. (6) Straightening up from the bowing posture. (7) Calm composure in the erect posture. (8) Prostration [*sujūd*]. (9) Calm composure in the posture of prostration. (10) Sitting between the two acts of prostration. (11) Calm composure in the sitting posture. (12) The final testimony [*tashahhud*]. (13) Adopting a sitting posture in order to make the final testimony. (14) Invocation of blessing [*ṣalāh*] on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). (15) The salutation [*taslīm*].

He must also strive to perfect his own ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], to master its performance and improve it, in order that he may be entitled to receive the same reward as those who pray behind him. Failure to do so will result in his being charged with the weight of their sins, whenever he acts badly and falls short.



26.

Concerning the *ma' mūm*,
i.e., the worshipper who follows a leader [*imām*]
when performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], either
singly or as a member of a congregation [*jamā'a*].

As for the *ma' mūm*, i.e., the worshipper who follows a leader [*imām*] when performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], it is incumbent upon him to formulate the intention to pray in that capacity [*an yanwiya 'l-i' timām*].

[If there is only one *ma' mūm* present] he must station himself to the right of the prayer leader [*imām*]; he must not stand in front of him, and he must not stand to his left.

If they are a congregation [*jamā'a*],²⁷⁵ however, the customary practice [*sunna*] is for them to stand behind the prayer leader [*imām*]. So, if only one *ma' mūm* is present at the outset, standing to the leader's right as he utters the initial declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*kabbara*], and another worshipper arrives at that point, the newcomer should join him in saying "Allāhu Akbar," while squeezing into line beside him. Then the two of them should move back together, to form a row behind the prayer leader [*imām*]. If there is not enough space to accommodate the second person, the prayer leader [*imām*] should push the pair of them back with his hand. He should not move forward from his own spot, unless there is a severe shortage of space behind him.

If a worshipper arrives when the congregation [*jamā'a*] is already assembled, and he can find a gap in the row, he should insert himself into it. If he cannot find any gap to occupy, he must station himself to the right of the prayer leader [*imām*]. He must not pull a man back abruptly, to stand beside him and form a new row, because that is likely to result in confusion and disharmony, and may stir up feelings of hatred and hostility. It will also have the effect of invalidating the prayer [*ṣalāt*]

²⁷⁵ That is to say, if there is more than one *ma' mūm* present.

performed by the one who is pulled out of his row, because he will become a solitary individual [*fadhhdh*] in the process, and that [detachment from the ranks of the congregation] invalidates the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], according to our doctrine [*‘inda-nā*].²⁷⁶

The late arrival should make a serious effort to squeeze his shoulders into the row, so that he can utter the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*yukabbiru*] and enter into the ritual prayer in a state of consecration [*yuhrimu bi’ṣ-ṣalāt*].²⁷⁷ He may then step back, together with one of the other worshippers, to form a new row.

If he enters the mosque [*masjid*] at the stage where the prayer leader [*imām*] is already in the bowing posture [*rukū’*], the latecomer should pronounce two declarations of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*kabbara takbīratāin*]: one of them for the purpose of consecration [*li’l-ihrām*], and the other in connection with the act of bowing [*li’r-rukū’*].²⁷⁸ It is permissible, however, for him to utter only one such declaration, while intending them both [*in kabbara wāḥida wa nawā-humā*].

If he enters at the stage where the prayer leader [*imām*] is already pronouncing the final testimony [*at-tashahhud al-akhīr*],²⁷⁹ his recommended course is to formulate the intention to perform the prayer [*an yanwiya ’ṣ-ṣalat*], to pronounce the [consecratory] declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*yukabbira*], and to sit down next to the prayer leader [*imām*], so that he will still be in time to share the merit of the congregation [*jamā’a*]. Then, when the leader concludes the congregational prayer with the salutation [*idhā sallama ’l-imām*], the late arrival should build on his [consecratory] declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, and go on to perform a complete ritual prayer by himself [*banā ’alā takbīrati-hi wa ṣallā*].

²⁷⁶ When he uses the expression *‘inda-nā* [in our opinion; according to our doctrine], Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is referring to the doctrine of the Ḥanbali school [*madhhab*] of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*].

²⁷⁷ In other words, he must insert himself sufficiently to be counted as a member of the congregation, at which point he can validly pronounce the consecratory declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-ihrām*], by saying: “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]”

²⁷⁸ See the description of *takbīrat ar-rukū’* on pp. 180–81 above.

²⁷⁹ That is to say, when the performance of that particular ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is within a few moments of being concluded. (For the wording of the final testimony [*at-tashahhud al-akhīr*], see pp. 184 and 185 above.)

27.

Traditional sayings [*aḥādīth*] attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and his Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh's good pleasure be upon them all) concerning the proper conduct of the *ma'mūm*.

The following requirements must also be observed by the *ma'mūm*, i.e., the worshipper who follows a leader [*imām*] when performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]:

He must not anticipate the utterances and movements of prayer leader [*imām*], especially when it comes to pronouncing the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*], adopting the postures of bowing [*rukū'*] and prostration [*sujūd*], and rising up from these two postures.

While he must be extremely careful to avoid acting prematurely at these stages in particular, he must also spare no effort in striving to ensure that every single one of his actions in the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is subsequent to the corresponding action of the leader [*imām*]. We have inherited many traditional sayings [*aḥādīth*] to that effect, some attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and others to his Companions (may Allāh's good pleasure be upon them all).

For instance, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

How dare a person raise his head in advance of the prayer leader [*imām*]? Is he not afraid that Allāh may transform his head into the head of an ass?

According to another tradition [*ḥadīth*], he once said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

The prayer leader [*imām*] bows down [*yarka'u*] before you do, prostrates himself [*yaṣjudu*] before you do, and raises his head before you do.

It was al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib²⁸⁰ (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said:

²⁸⁰ See note 223 on p. 162 above.

“We used to pray behind the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and whenever he sank down from his upright posture [to perform the act of prostration], not one of us would bend his back until Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had placed his forehead on the ground.”

In other words, the Companions of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to stand quite still behind him, maintaining an upright posture, until the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) sank down, pronounced the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*hattā yanḥaṭṭa wa yukabbira*], and placed his forehead on the ground. Only then did they follow him [in performing the act of prostration].

Several of the Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them) are reported as having said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would [have risen from his prostration and] be standing up straight, while we were still prostrating ourselves [*sujjad*].”

According to one traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

How dare a person raise his head in advance of the prayer leader [*imām*]? Is he not scared that Allāh may transform his head into the head of an ass, or into the head of a pig?

Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “I once heard Abu’l-Qāsim²⁸¹ (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

“How dare a person raise his head in advance of the prayer leader [*imām*]? Is he not scared that Allāh may transform his head into the head of an ass?”

It is related that Ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once noticed that a man was anticipating the movements of the prayer leader [*imām*], so he said to him:

“You have neither performed the prayer by yourself, nor have you performed it while following your leader [*mā ṣalaita waḥda-ka wa lā bi-imāmi-ka ’qtadaita*]. He who has neither prayed by himself, nor followed his prayer leader, that is someone who has no prayer at all to his credit [*lā ṣalāta lah*].”

²⁸¹ Abu’l-Qāsim [father of al-Qasim] is the *kunya* [surname of relationship] of the Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), whose son al-Qāsim died in infancy. (See Vol. 1, p. 100.)

It is also related that Ibn ‘Umar²⁸² (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once noticed that a man was anticipating the movements of the prayer leader [*imām*], so he said to him: “You have neither performed the prayer by yourself, nor have you performed it with the prayer leader [*mā ṣalaita waḥda-ka wa lā ṣalaita ma‘a ‘l-imām*].” He then gave the culprit a beating, and ordered him to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] all over again.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ²⁸³ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), from Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the latter stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

The prayer leader [*imām*] has been appointed for no other purpose than to set an example for the congregation to follow [*li-yu’ tamma bi-hi*]. So, when he pronounces the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*idhā kabbara fa-kabbirū*].²⁸⁴ When he bows down, you must then bow down [*idhā raka‘a fa-rka‘ū*]. When he raises his head, you must then raise your heads. When he says:

May Allāh hear and accept *sami‘a ‘llāhu*
the praise of one who praises Him! *li-man ḥamidah.*

—you must then say, all of you together:

Our Lord, to You be the praise! *Rabba-nā la-ka ‘l-ḥamd.*

When he prostrates himself, you must then prostrate yourselves [*idhā sajada fa-‘sjudū*], but you must not prostrate yourselves before he prostrates himself.

When he raises his head, you must then raise your heads, but you must not raise your heads before he raises his. And if he performs the entire prayer in a sitting position, you must all remain seated throughout the prayer [*idhā ṣallā jālisān fa-ṣallū jamī’an julūsā*].²⁸⁵

²⁸² ‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Umar, the son of the Caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with them both), was a revered Companion in his own right. He died in A.H. 73 or 74.

²⁸³ Abū Ṣāliḥ as-Sammān al-Madānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was a famous *muhaddith* [narrator of Prophetic tradition], from whom al-A‘amash (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is said to have transmitted a thousand traditions [*aḥādīth*]. He died in A.H. 101.

²⁸⁴ In other words: “When he says: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great],’ you must say: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great].’”

²⁸⁵ This last sentence refers to a situation where the prayer leader [*imām*] is physically incapable of assuming an upright posture. According to a manual of Ḥanbalī jurisprudence [*fiqh*]:

“In the exceptional case of a long-bearded [i.e., very old] prayer leader [*imām alḥā*], who performs the entire prayer in a sitting posture, on account of a sickness from which he can be expected to recover, the members of the congregation must remain seated behind him throughout the performance of the ritual prayer.” (See: Imām Muwaffaq ad-Dīn ‘Abdu’llāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Qadāma al-Maqdisī. *Al-‘Umda: fi fiqh Imām as-Sunna Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal ash-Shaibānī* [radiyya ‘llāhu ‘an-hu]. Cairo, Egypt: Al-Maktabat as-Salafiyya, n.d.: p. 36.)

In a scholarly treatise [*risāla*] of his, our own Imām, Abū ‘Abdu’llāh Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), has informed us that Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Companion [*Ṣāḥib*] of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), is reported as having said:²⁸⁶

“It was Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) who taught us how to perform our ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], and it was he who taught us what we had to say in the course of performing it.

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) gave us these instructions:

“When the prayer leader pronounces the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*idhā kabbara ‘l-imām fa-kabbirū*].²⁸⁷

“When he recites from the Qur’ān, you must listen in silence [*idhā qara’ a fa-anṣitū*].

“Then, when he [reaches the end of *al-Fātiḥa* and] pronounces the words:

not of those who earn Your wrath,	<i>ghairi ‘l-maghḏūbi ‘alai-him</i>
nor of those who go astray. (1:7)	<i>wa la ‘ḏ-ḏālīn.</i>

—you must say: “*Āmīn* [Amen],” so that Allāh (Exalted is He) may grant you a favorable response.

“When he pronounces the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, and bows down, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, and bow down [*idhā kabbara wa raka’a fa-kabbirū wa ‘raka’ū*].²⁸⁸

“When he raises his head [from the bowing posture], and says:

May Allāh hear and accept	<i>sami’a ‘llāhu</i>
the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>

—you must then raise your heads, and say:

O Allāh,	<i>Allāhumma</i>
our Lord, to You be the praise!	<i>Rabba-nā la-ka ‘l-ḥamd.</i> ²⁸⁹

—so that Allāh may hear you.

“When he says “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],” and prostrates himself, you must then say “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],” and prostrate yourselves [*idhā kabbara wa sajada fa-kabbirū wa ‘sjudū*].

²⁸⁶ **Author’s note:** Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) has provided a chain of transmitting authorities [*isnād*] to establish the authenticity of this report.

²⁸⁷ This refers to the consecratory declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-iḥrām*].

²⁸⁸ This refers to the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness at the stage of bowing [*takbīrat ar-rukū’*].

²⁸⁹ Note the addition of *Allāhumma* [O Allāh!] in this instance.

“When he raises his head and says “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],” you must then raise your heads and say “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]” [*idhā...kabbara...fa...kabbirū*].”

“At this point, Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) remarked:

“And so on, and so forth [*fa-tilka bi-tilka*].

“When he is in the sitting posture [*qa‘da*], each of you must repeat the words:

Greetings, prayers and good deeds are due to Allāh...	<i>at-taḥiyyātu li’llāhi wa ‘ṣ-ṣalawātu wa ‘ṭ-ṭayyibāt...</i>
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—until you come to the end of the testimony [*tashahhud*].”²⁹⁰

The following explanations have been provided by Imām Abū ‘Abdu’llāh Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal ash-Shaibānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him; may He allow us to die faithful, root and branch, to the doctrine of his school [*madhhab*], and may He assemble us at the Resurrection as members of his company!):

“Let us first consider the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

When he pronounces the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*idhā kabbara fa-kabbirū*].

“This means that the members of the congregation must wait for the prayer leader [*imām*] to say: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]’ [*ḥattā yukabbira*]. They must wait and listen until he has completed his declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*], and until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should they repeat after him: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]’ [*yukabbirūna ba‘dah*].

“People grossly misinterpret these Prophetic sayings [*aḥādīth*], and even ignore them altogether, not to mention the fact that most of them regard the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] as a trivial matter, which hardly deserves their serious attention. So it sometimes happens that, as soon as the prayer leader [*imām*] starts to pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*], they all launch into the *takbīr* simultaneously with him, thereby committing a grave mistake. It is not correct for them to start pronouncing the *takbīr* until the prayer leader [*imām*]

²⁹⁰ For the complete wording of the testimony [*tashahhud*], see pp. 84 and 85 above.

has finished saying: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],’ and the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. This is what the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) meant, when he said:

When the prayer leader pronounces the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*idhā kabbara ‘l-imām fa-kabbirū*].

“The prayer leader [*imām*] does not become a proclaimer of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*mukabbir*] until he says: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]’ If he were to say: ‘*Allāhu...*,’ and then fall silent, the prayer leader [*imām*] would not yet be a proclaimer of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*mukabbir*]—not before having said: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]’

“The people [in the congregation] should therefore pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*yukabbiru ‘n-nās*] after he has said: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]’ By launching into the *takbīr* simultaneously with the prayer leader [*imām*], they are committing a grave mistake. They are also guilty of disregarding the word of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), for the following reason:

“Suppose you were to say: ‘When so-and-so performs his ritual prayer [*idhā ṣallā fulān*], I shall speak to him.’ The meaning you intended to convey would be: ‘I shall wait for him to perform his ritual prayer, and then, when he has finished praying, I shall speak to him.’ You would not mean to suggest that you were going to speak to him while he was still performing his prayer! Well then, the same principle applies to the meaning intended by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when he used the expression:

When the prayer leader pronounces the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*idhā kabbara ‘l-imām fa-kabbirū*].

“If the prayer leader [*imām*] lacks training in religious jurisprudence [*fiqh*], he is all too likely to prolong the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*], while someone who utters it simultaneously with him [*yukabbiru ma‘a-hu*] is all too likely to pronounce it abruptly, so that he finishes the *takbīr* before the leader has finished. The person concerned will thus become a proclaimer of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*mukabbir*] in advance of the prayer leader [*imām*].

“If a member of the congregation pronounces the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness in advance of the prayer leader [*imām*], he will not be credited with the performance of a ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. Since he has embarked upon the prayer in advance of the leader [*qabla ’l-imām*], and has said: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]’ before [the leader completed] the sentence [*qabla ’l-kalām*], he does not have a ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] to his credit.

“Let us now move on to consider the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“When he pronounces the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, and bows down, you must then pronounce the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness, and bow down [*idhā kabbara wa raka’a fa-kabbirū wa ’raka’ū*].

“This means that the members of the congregation must remain standing upright, as they wait for the prayer leader [*imām*] to say: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]’ and adopt the bowing posture [*hattā yukabbira wa yarka’a*], and that they must maintain their upright posture until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should they follow him.

“Next comes the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“When he raises his head [from the bowing posture], and says:

May Allāh hear and accept	<i>sami’a ’llāhu</i>
the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>

—you must then raise your heads, and say:

O Allāh,	<i>Allāhumma</i>
our Lord, to You be the praise!	<i>Rabba-nā la-ka ’l-ḥamd.</i>

“This means that the members of the congregation must remain quite still in the bowing posture [*rukū’*], until the prayer leader [*imām*] raises his head, and says:

May Allāh hear and accept	<i>sami’a ’llāhu</i>
the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>

“They must maintain the bowing posture [*rukū’*] until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should they follow him, raising their heads and saying:

O Allāh,	<i>Allāhumma</i>
our Lord, to You be the praise!	<i>Rabba-nā la-ka ’l-ḥamd.</i>

“Next comes the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“When he says “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],” and prostrates himself, you must then say “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],” and prostrate yourselves [*idhā kabbara wa sajada fa-kabbirū wa ’sjudū*].

“This means that the members of the congregation must remain standing upright, while the prayer leader [*imām*] says: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],’ and sinks down into the posture of prostration [*sujūd*]. They must maintain their upright posture until he places his forehead on the ground. Then, and only then, should they follow him.

“This interpretation is confirmed by the traditional report, according to which it was al-Barā’ ibn ‘Āzib (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said:

“We used to pray behind the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), and whenever he sank down from his upright posture [to perform the act of prostration], not one of us would bend his back until Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had placed his forehead on the ground.’

“Besides, all of this is fully in accordance with statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“The prayer leader [*imām*] bows down [*yarka’u*] before you do, prostrates himself [*yasjudu*] before you do, and raises his head before you do.’

“Let us now go on to consider the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“When he raises his head [from the posture of prostration] and says “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!],” you must then raise your heads and say “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]” [*idhā...kabbara...fa...kabbirū*].’

“This means that the members of the congregation must remain quite still in the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], until the prayer leader [*imām*] raises his head, and says: “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]” They must maintain the posture of prostration [*sujūd*] until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should they follow him, for at that point they must raise their heads.

“Finally, we must consider the terse statement of the Prophet (Allāh

bless him and give him peace):

“And so on, and so forth [*fa-tilka bi-tilka*].’

“This is a way of saying that, as you now proceed to perform the second cycle [*rak‘a*] of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], you must observe each of these instructions at the appropriate stage. For instance:

“You must remain standing upright, as you wait for the prayer leader [*imām*] to say: ‘*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]’ and adopt the bowing posture [*ḥattā yukabbira wa yarka‘a*], and you must maintain your upright posture until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should you follow him.

“You must remain quite still in the bowing posture [*rukū‘*], until the prayer leader [*imām*] raises his head, and says:

May Allāh hear and accept	<i>sami‘a ‘llāhu</i>
the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>

“You must maintain the bowing posture [*rukū‘*] until the sound of his voice can no longer be heard. Then, and only then, should you follow him, raising your heads and saying:

Our Lord, to You be the praise!	<i>Rabba-nā la-ka ‘l-ḥamd.</i>
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“In other words, the statement of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“And so on, and so forth [*fa-tilka bi-tilka*].’

—is a succinct reference to every raising and lowering [of the head].

“This is all about perfecting the valid performance of the ritual prayer [*itmām aṣ-ṣalāt*], so you must grasp it with your understanding, study it in depth, and master it thoroughly. You must realize that there will be many people, on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], who have no ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] to their credit, due to their habit of anticipating the prayer leader [*imām*] in adopting the postures of bowing [*rukū‘*] and prostration [*sujūd*], and in the raising and lowering [of the head]. In the words of the Prophetic tradition [*ḥadīth*]:

There will come a time when people pray, yet do not perform the prayer [*yuṣallūna wa lā yuṣallūn*].

“That time could well be this present age of ours, since people nowadays are generally in the habit of anticipating the prayer leader

[*imām*], and of failing to perform the basic essentials [*arkān*] of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], not to mention their neglect of its necessary elements [*wājibāt*], its recommended practices [*masnūnāt*], and [other elements that contribute to] its complete refinement [*tamām*].”²⁹¹



²⁹¹ For lists of the basic essentials [*arkān*] of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], its necessary practices [*wājibāt*], recommended practices [*masnūnāt*], and formal refinements [*hai'āt*], see Vol. 1, pp. 13–16.

28.

Concerning what is required of someone who notices that another person is performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] incorrectly.

If someone happens to notice that another person is not performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] correctly, especially if he sees him omitting some of its basic essentials [*arkān*]²⁹² and necessary elements [*wājibāt*],²⁹³ as well as its customary refinements [*ādāb*],²⁹⁴ it is incumbent upon the observer to admonish him, to make him aware of his shortcomings, and to offer him sound advice, so that he may correct his mistakes from that time on, and seek forgiveness for those he has made in the past. If the observer fails to do this, he will be counted as a partner [*sharīk*] in the culprit's misconduct, and will thus be charged with the burden of the latter's guilt and sin.

As we are informed in the tradition [*ḥadīth*], the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Woe betide the learned [*ʿālim*] on account of the ignorant [*jāhil*], inasmuch as the former fails to teach the latter.

If it had not been the case that teaching the ignorant [*jāhil*] is incumbent upon the man of learning [*ʿālim*], as a strict obligation and a prescribed religious duty, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would not have threatened him with woe, as the dire consequence of his failure to provide instruction. In order to deserve such a threat [*wāʿid*], a person must be guilty of failing to carry out a duty that is strictly incumbent [*wājib*] and obligatory [*fard*], as opposed to one that is merely voluntary and supererogatory [*nafl*].

²⁹² See note 291 on p. 216 above.

²⁹³ See note 291 on p. 216 above.

²⁹⁴ In this context, the term *ādāb* [good manners; proprieties] is obviously meant to cover those elements in the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] that are customary and highly recommended, though not absolutely essential to its validity.

Bilāl ibn Sa‘d²⁹⁵ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is traditionally reported as having said:

“As long as the sinful error remains concealed from public view, it causes harm to no one except the person who commits it. But once it becomes openly apparent, and if it does not get to be corrected, it causes harm to members of the community in general.”

That is because of their failure to do their duty, which requires them to change the situation for the better, and to express their disapproval to the person whose sinful error has become so conspicuous, instead of saying nothing about it. As a result of their failure to speak out, the situation is bound to deteriorate still further, and the entire community becomes responsible for the unfortunate consequences. The virtuous individual [*muḥsin*] is actually participating with the wrongdoer in his wrongdoing, as long as he fails to admonish him and offer him good advice.”

As we learn from traditional sources, it was Ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

“When someone happens to notice that another person is doing something wrong in the way he performs his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], but fails to warn him of the consequences, the observer is associating himself with the culprit as his partner in sin and shame, and he is serving as an accomplice of Satan the accursed [*ash-Shaitān al-la‘īn*].”

That is because the Devil wants him to keep quiet and say nothing about the problem, and to refrain from engaging in mutual assistance toward piety [*birr*] and true devotion [*taqwā*], the two virtues enjoined by Allāh (Exalted is He) in His words (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And help one another to practice piety and true devotion.	<i>wa ta‘āwunū ‘ala ‘l-birri</i>
And do not help one another to practice sin and enmity, and be careful	<i>wa ‘t-taḳwā.</i> <i>wa lā ta‘āwanū</i> <i>‘ala ‘l-ithmi</i>
to observe your duty to Allāh; surely Allāh is terrible in retribution. (5:2)	<i>wa ‘l-‘udwān:</i> <i>wa ‘ttaḳu ‘llāh:</i> <i>Inna ‘llāha</i> <i>Shadīdu‘l-‘iqāb.</i>

²⁹⁵ Bilāl ibn Sa‘d Tamīm as-Sakūrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the regular prayer leader [*imām*] at the Great Mosque of Damascus. He was renowned for his pious devotion, which is said to have been comparable to that of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). He died in A.H. 122.

The Devil wants him to refrain from offering the good advice which they [as fellow servants of Allāh] are duty-bound to give to one another. He wishes to see the religion [*dīn*] fade away, to see Islām disappear, and to see all creatures engaged in sinful conduct. For an intelligent person, therefore, it makes no sense to obey the Devil [*ash-Shaiṭān*]. Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

O Children of Adam,	<i>yā Banī Ādama</i>
let not Satan	<i>lā yaftinanna-kumu 'sh-shaiṭānu</i>
tempt you as he brought your parents	<i>ka-mā akhrajā abawāi-kum</i>
out of the Garden [of Paradise],	<i>mina 'l-jannati</i>
stripping them of their garments.	<i>yanzi' u 'an-humā saw'āti-himā.</i>
(7:27)	

He has also told us (Glorious and Exalted is He):

[The Devil] summons his party only	<i>innamā yad'ū</i>
that they may be among	<i>hizba-hu</i>
the inhabitants	<i>li-yakūnū</i>
of the blazing inferno. (35:6)	<i>min aṣḥābi 's-sa'ir.</i>

As you ought to be aware, everything that is currently found wanting in the performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], in the payment of the alms-due [*ṣalāt*], and in the observance of all the other forms of worshipful service [*'ibādāt*], is due to the silence and reticence of the experts in religious knowledge and Islāmic jurisprudence [*ahl al-'ilm wa 'l-fiqh*], and to their failure to provide sound advice, instruction and education. This tendency may originate in the first place among the ignorant, but then it spreads to include the people of knowledge, and comes to represent their typical attitude.

What a strange state of affairs! If one of these people happened to see a man stealing a single grain of wheat, let alone a whole loaf of bread, from a Jewish person or a Muslim, he would not restrain himself for a moment from yelling at the thief, scolding him, and rebuking him for his bad behavior. Yet when he notices that someone, while praying, is stealing the basic essentials of the ritual prayer [*arkān aṣ-ṣalāt*], omitting them along with necessary elements, and moving in advance of the prayer leader, that same observer remains silent and says nothing to the culprit. What he ought to do, of course, is let him know that he is doing something wrong, provide him with instruction, and make him aware of the need for improvement.

Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

The worst kind of thief is a person who steals from his own ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].

His listeners asked: "O Messenger of Allāh, how can a person steal from his own ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]?" So he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

[He steals from it when] he does not perform its bowing [*rukū'*] and its prostration [*sujūd*] correctly and completely.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Shall I tell you who is the worst kind of thief?

His listeners said: "Yes, of course, O Messenger of Allāh, do tell us who he is!" So he explained (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

He is someone who performs neither the bowing posture [*rukū'*] of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], nor its prostration [*sujūd*], correctly and completely.

It was Salmān al-Fārisī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said: "The ritual prayer is a measure [*aṣ-ṣalātu mikyāl*], so to one who performs it in full, the recompense will be paid in full. As for anyone who gives short measure, you know what Allāh (Exalted is He) has said about those who give short measure [*al-muṭaffifīn*]!"²⁹⁶

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Alī, or 'Alī ibn Shaibān (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who was a member of one of the deputations [*wafd*] that came to visit Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) [after the conquest of Mecca],²⁹⁷ the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Allāh takes no notice of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] performed by a servant [of His] who does not straighten his spine in his act of bowing [*rukū'*] and his act of prostration [*sujūd*].

²⁹⁶ Salmān al-Fārisī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was alluding to Q. 83:1-9.

²⁹⁷ In A.H. 9, after the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) had gained possession of Mecca, Arab tribal deputations came to him from all directions.

Abū Huraira³⁸⁶ (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

“A man once came into the mosque [*maṣjid*], while Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was sitting to one side of the place of worship, and proceeded to perform the ritual prayer [*fa-ṣallā*]. Then he came over to Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and saluted him with the greeting of peace [*sallama ‘alai-hi*]. The Messenger returned his greeting [*radda ‘alai-hi ‘s-salām*], and said: ‘Now go back and pray [*ṣalli*], for you have not yet performed the ritual prayer [*lam tuṣalli*].’ So the man performed the prayer as he had performed it the first time [*fa-ṣallā ka-mā ṣallā*], then he came over and offered the greeting of peace [*sallama*]. Once again, Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said to him: ‘Now go back and pray [*ṣalli*], for you have not yet performed the ritual prayer [*lam tuṣalli*].’ When he had done this three times, the man said: ‘By Him who sent you to convey the Truth as a Prophet [*bi’l-Ḥaqqi Nabīyyan*], if there is a better way [of performing the prayer] than this, please tell me what it is!’

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by telling him:

“When you are ready to perform your ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], you must start by making a thorough job of the ritual ablution [*wuḍū’*]. Then you must stand facing the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka’ba in Mecca], and proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*kabbir*].²⁹⁸ Then you must recite as much of the Qur’ān as you can manage with ease. Then you must bow down, so that you are calmly composed in the bowing posture [*ḥattā taṭma’inna rāki’an*]. Then you must straighten up, so that you assume a steady upright posture [*ḥattā ta’tadila qā’iman*]. Then you must prostrate yourself, so that you are calmly composed in the posture of prostration [*ḥattā taṭma’inna sājidan*]. Then you must sit up, so that you are calmly composed in the sitting posture [*ḥattā taṭma’inna jālisan*]. Then you must prostrate yourself [a second time], so that you are calmly composed in the posture of prostration [*ḥattā taṭma’inna sājidan*]. Then you must sit up [again], so that you are calmly composed in the sitting posture [*ḥattā taṭma’inna jālisan*]. Then you must do likewise at every stage in your performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”

According to another traditional account [*ḥadīth*], Rifā’a ibn Rāfi²⁹⁹

²⁹⁸ The word *kabbir* is the imperative form of the verb *kabbara* (see note 248 on p. 181 above).

²⁹⁹ Abū Mu’adh Rifā’a ibn Rāfi’ ibn Mālik az-Zarqī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) was a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), from whom he related many traditions [*aḥādīth*]. He died in A.H. 41.

(may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

“While we were sitting in a circle around Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), a man came in [to the mosque], stood facing the *Qibla*, and proceeded to perform the ritual prayer [*fa-ṣallā*]. As soon as he had finished his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he came over and offered the greeting of peace [*sallama*] to Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) and to the people in his company. Then Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) told him: ‘Now go back and pray [*ṣalli*], for you have not yet performed the ritual prayer [*lam tuṣalli*].’ He gave him this same instruction two or three times, so the man said: ‘I am simply incapable of doing what you require of me, since I do not know what it is that you find lacking in my performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]!’

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded to this by saying:

“The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is not performed correctly and completely by any one of you, unless he starts by making a thorough job of the ritual ablution [*wuḍū’*], as commanded by Allāh (Exalted is He). This means that he must wash his face, and his hands [and lower arms] up to the elbows, that he must rub his head [with his wet hands],³⁰⁰ and that he must wash his feet up to the ankles.

“He must then proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh (Exalted is He) and extol Him [*yukabbiru ’llāha—ta’āla—wa yaḥmadu-hu*].

“Then he must recite as much of the Qur’ān as his knowledge of it permits.

“Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*yukabbiru*] and place the palms of his hands on his knees, so that his joints are comfortable and relaxed.

“Then he must say:

May Allāh hear and accept	<i>sami’a ’llāhu</i>
the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>

—and assume an upright posture, so that his spine is straight and erect, and so that every member of his body is in its proper position.

“Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*yukabbiru*] and prostrate himself [*yasjudu*], placing his forehead firmly on the ground, so that all his joints are comfortable and relaxed.

“Then he must proclaim the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*yukabbiru*], sit evenly on his buttocks, and straighten his spine.’

³⁰⁰ As Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 1, pp. 8–9, when listing the obligatory elements [*farā’id*] of ritual purification:

Rubbing the head [*mash’ar-ra’s*]. The way to do this is by dipping the hands in water, then raising them [wet but] empty, placing them on the front part of the head, drawing them to the back of the head, then returning them to their original position.

“The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) continued in this vein, until he had described every stage of a ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] consisting of four cycles [*rakaʿāt*]. When he had finished, he added:

“The ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is not performed correctly and completely by any one of you, unless and until he does it in the manner I have just described.”

From this we learn that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) insisted on the correct and complete performance of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], including the act of bowing [*rukūʿ*] and the act of prostration [*sujūd*]. He has let it be known, in fact, that the the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] will not be accepted unless it is duly performed in this manner. We also learn that it was out of the question for him (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to remain silent, when he noticed that the man was performing a defective version of the ritual prayer [*yuṣallī ṣalāt nāqiṣa*].

If it had been permissible to postpone the explanation beyond the moment of need, and to refrain from rebuking the ignorant person and offering him instruction, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would surely have kept silent. He would have entrusted the handling of the situation to the discretion of the Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), and would have been content to let it pass without comment. Since he actually went to such great lengths in order to rebuke the man, and to provide him with instruction, he clearly meant to indicate the necessity of active intervention.

To those of his Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them) who were present with him on that occasion, it must have been obvious that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was exhorting them to take the same action he was taking, whenever they noticed someone doing the kind of thing that man was doing in the performance of his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. They must have realized that he expected them to instruct their own companions, and their companions' companions, concerning the nature and application of the rules of the Sacred Law [*kaifiyya aḥkām ash-Sharʿ*], from then until the arrival of the final Hour [*as-Sāʿa*].

29.

Concerning the qualifications of the muezzin [mu'adhhdhin], and how he should act when giving the call to prayer [adhān] and the announcement that the prayer is about to begin [iqāma].

It is incumbent upon the muezzin [mu'adhhdhin] to improve his elocution, to make sure that he does not commit any mispronunciation in the two declarations of faith [shahādatain].³⁰¹

He must be thoroughly familiar with the times prescribed for the performance of the five obligatory daily prayers.

He must not give the call to prayer [lā yu'adhhdhina] until after the commencement of the period of time prescribed for a particular prayer, except in the case of the [prayer of] daybreak [al-fajr].³⁰²

In giving his call to prayer [adhān], he must count on obtaining the favor of Allāh (Exalted is He), and he must not accept any worldly remuneration for giving the call.

He must face the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca] while

³⁰¹ The first declaration of faith [shahāda] is:

I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh. *ashhadu an lā ilāha illa 'llāh.**

The second declaration of faith [shahāda] is:

I bear witness that *ashhadu anna Muḥammadan*
Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. *Rasūlu 'llāh.***

(* The final *n*-sound in *an* assimilates to the following *l*-sound, so that the actual pronunciation is “*al_lā ilāha...*” ** The final *n*-sound in *Muḥammadan* assimilates to the following *r*-sound, so that the actual pronunciation is “...*Muḥammadar_rasūlu 'llāh.*”)

³⁰² In the case of the dawn or daybreak prayer [ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ / ṣalāt al-fajr], the call to prayer [adhān] may be given earlier, to allow people time to wake up and prepare themselves. As their authority for this solitary exception to the general rule, the religious scholars cite the saying of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Bilāl will give the call to prayer [yu'adhhdhinu] while it is still nighttime, so you may eat and drink until Ibn Umm Maktūm gives the call [at daybreak].

(See: Imām Muwaffaq ad-Dīn 'Abdu'llāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Qadāma al-Maqdisī. *Al-'Umda: fī fiqh Imām as-Sunna Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal ash-Shaibānī [raḍiya 'llāhu 'an-hu]*. Cairo, Egypt: Al-Maktabat as-Salafiyya, n.d.: p. 27.)

uttering the proclamation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*] and the two declarations of faith [*shahādatain*].

While uttering the actual summons to prayer [*ad-du'ā' ila 'ṣ-ṣalāt*], he must turn his face to the right and to the left.

When he has given the call to the sunset prayer [*adhdhana li-ṣalāt al-maghrib*], he must sit down for a little while, allowing a brief interval to elapse between the *adhān* [the summoning call]³⁰³ and the *iqāma* [the announcement that the actual performance of the ritual prayer is about to begin].³⁰⁴

³⁰³ The call to prayer [*adhān*] is uttered in the following words:

Allāh is Supremely Great! Allāh is Supremely Great!	Allāhu Akbar: Allāhu Akbar.
Allāh is Supremely Great! Allāh is Supremely Great!	Allāhu Akbar: Allāhu Akbar.
I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh.	ashhadu an lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*
I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh.	ashhadu an lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*
I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.	ashhadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūlu 'llāh.*
I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.	ashhadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūlu 'llāh.*
Come to prayer! Come to prayer!	hayya 'ala 'ṣ-ṣalāh: hayya 'ala 'ṣ-ṣalāh.
Come to salvation! Come to salvation!	hayya 'ala 'l-falāh: hayya 'ala 'l-falāh.
Allāh is Supremely Great! Allāh is Supremely Great!	Allāhu Akbar: Allāhu Akbar.
There is no god but Allāh!	lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

(* See note 301 on p. 224.)

In the call [*adhān*] to the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*], the words:

Prayer is better than sleep!	aṣ-ṣalātu khairun mina 'n-nawm,
Prayer is better than sleep!	aṣ-ṣalātu khairun mina 'n-nawm.

—are added after:

Come to salvation! Come to salvation!	hayya 'ala 'l-falāh: hayya 'ala 'l-falāh.
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³⁰⁴ The *iqāma*, the announcement that the ritual prayer is about to begin, is an abbreviated version of the *adhān* [call to prayer], with the addition of the words (repeated twice): *qad qāmati' ṣ-ṣalāh* [The prayer is about to begin!] Thus:

Allāh is Supremely Great! Allāh is Supremely Great!	Allāhu Akbar: Allāhu Akbar.
I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh.	ashhadu an lā ilāha illa 'llāh.*
I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh.	Muḥammadan ashhadu anna Rasūlu 'llāh.*
Come to prayer!	hayya 'ala 'ṣ-ṣalāh.
Come to salvation!	hayya 'ala 'l-falāh.
The prayer is about to begin!	qad qāmati' ṣ-ṣalāh.
The prayer is about to begin!	qad qāmati' ṣ-ṣalāh.
Allāh is Supremely Great! Allāh is Supremely Great!	Allāhu Akbar: Allāhu Akbar.
There is no god but Allāh!	lā ilāha illa 'llāh.

(* See note 301 on p. 224.)

It is reprehensible on his part, that he should give the call to prayer [*an yu' adhdhina*] while he is in a state of major or minor ritual impurity [*junub aw muhdith*].³⁰⁵

When he has finished pronouncing the *iqāma*, it is not appropriate for him to split the ranks [formed by the members of the congregation], in order to station himself in the first row.

Once he has delivered the call to prayer [*adhān*] from a particular spot, it is not appropriate for him to move to a different spot in order to pronounce the *iqāma*. This does not apply, however, if it would be difficult for him to do both in the same place. If he has given the call [*qad adhdhana*] from a minaret [*manāra*],³⁰⁶ for instance, he should pronounce the *iqāma* in a spot that is suitable for performing the prayer [*ṣalāt*], or wherever is most convenient for him.



³⁰⁵ The term *junub* is applied to a man who is in a state of major ritual impurity, by reason of sexual intercourse and discharge of the semen, and who is therefore disqualified from performing a valid ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] until he has completed a total ablution [*ghusl*].

The term *muhdith* is applied to a man who is in a state of minor ritual impurity, and who is therefore disqualified from performing a valid ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] until he has completed a lesser ablution [*wuḍū'*]. Causes of minor ritual impurity include the discharge of urine, fecal excrement, or wind, and the loss of consciousness (through normal sleep, as well as insanity and other abnormal states).

³⁰⁶ The words *ma'dhana* and *mi'dhana*—derived from the same root, '—*dh*—*n*, as *adhān* [the call to prayer] and *mu'adhdhin* [muezzin, one who gives the call to prayer]—are also used in Arabic as synonyms for *manāra* [minaret].

30.

On the importance of approaching the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] with an attitude of true humility and complete dedication.

Allāh will surely bestow His mercy upon the worshipper who approaches his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] with an attitude of humility, meekness, and submissiveness toward Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), fearfully and attentively, eagerly and apprehensively, anxiously and hopefully. He feels that nothing is more important to him than performing his prayer [*ṣalāt*] for the sake of his Lord (Exalted is He), engaging in intimate converse [*munājāt*] with Him, and establishing himself in His presence, in the postures of standing [*qā'im*] and sitting [*qā'id*], and in the acts of bowing [*rāki'*] and prostration [*sājid*]. In order to commit himself to this completely, he empties his heart and mind of their concerns. He makes a dedicated effort to fulfill his obligatory duties [*farā'id*], for he does not know whether he will be able to perform another ritual prayer [*hal yuṣallī ṣalāt*], after the one in which he is currently engaged, or whether his demise [*wafāt*] will suddenly overtake him, before that opportunity can arise. So he stands in the presence of his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He), melancholy and apprehensive, hoping that his performance will be accepted, and fearing its rejection. If He accepts it, he will experience blissful happiness, and if He rejects it, he will suffer painful distress.

How much is therefore at stake where you are concerned, O believer [*mu'min*] endowed with the radiant lights of Islām, in this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] and in the other components of your religious practice [*amal*]! All the more reason why you should approach it, as well as all those other duties, with an attitude of anxiety, despondency, timidity and apprehension.

As part of what He has prescribed for you, Allāh (Exalted is He) has decreed that you may never know whether or not a ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*],

or any good deed, has been accepted of you, and that you may never know whether or not you have been forgiven for committing a bad deed. Yet there you go, laughing and making merry, heedlessly immersed in the pleasures of worldly life! I wonder how you can be so free of care, in light of the certain knowledge [*yaqīn*], which has come from an Informant who is Truthful and Trustworthy [*Mukhbir Ṣādiq Amīn*], that you are heading toward the Fire of Hell. For He has said (Glorious and Exalted is He):

And there is not one of you
but shall go down to it
[the Fire of Hell];
that, for your Lord,
is a thing decreed, determined.
(19:71)

*wa in min-kum
illā wāridu-hā:*

*kāna ‘alā Rabbi-ka
ḥatman maqḍiyyā.*

What you have not received is the certain knowledge [*yaqīn*] that you will also emerge from it! For whom, therefore, is a prolonged state of lamentation and sorrow more suitable than for you, until Allāh sees fit to accept your offering?

Even then, you will not know exactly what lies in store for you. When evening falls, will you live to see the break of day? You may see the dawn, but will you still be alive when the evening comes around? Will you be greeted with tidings of the Garden of Paradise, or with tidings of the Fire of Hell? You have very good reason, therefore, to be less than completely happy with a wife, a child, or a piece of property.

Nothing could be more utterly astounding than the extent of your heedlessness, and the extent of your indifference to this enormously important matter. You are being driven toward your destination at a rapid pace, every day and every night, with every hour and with every twinkling of an eye, so you must prepare yourself for imminent arrival at your appointed term [*ajal*]. You must not continue to be heedless of this mighty peril that hangs over you like a shadow, for you are bound to experience death, and your encounter with it is inevitable; it may alight in your personal space tomorrow morning or tomorrow night. You must dispose of your worldly interests, for you will soon be extracted from all of that, and dispossessed of it completely. Whether you are bound for the Garden of Paradise or for the Fire of Hell, those interests will cease to be of any relevance whatsoever.

Especially in the case of the Fire of Hell, verbal explanations and stories fall far short of describing the reality of its nature, of imparting a true understanding of its size and scope and the variety of its torments, and of communicating the full extent of what it represents.

Al-'Abd aṣ-Ṣāliḥ [the Righteous Servant] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once said:

“Where the Fire of Hell is concerned, I find it astonishing that someone who is supposed to be fleeing from it can fall asleep, and as for the Garden of Paradise, I find it astonishing that someone who is supposed to be seeking it can fall asleep.”

By Allāh, if you ever withdraw from the flight from the one, and the quest for the other, you will surely be doomed to manifest disaster. Great will be your agony, and prolonged will be your grief and lamentation, tomorrow [at the Resurrection] in the company of those miserable wretches who are condemned to suffer painful torment.

If, on the other hand, you are determined to be a refugee [from the Fire of Hell] and a seeker [of the Garden of Paradise], you must on no account allow yourself to be misled by entertaining fanciful desires, or by taking pride in the signs of grace with which you are endowed. You must make a truly earnest commitment and a truly dedicated effort. You must be on your guard against the lower self [*nafs*] and the Devil [*Shaiṭān*], for each of them exerts a subtle influence, each of them poses a serious threat, and each of them is capable of wicked tricks and ruses. You must also be on your guard against this world, so that it does not captivate you with its charm, and so that it does not deceive you with vanities, its falsehood, its opulence and its glamorous appeal.

In the words of the tradition [*ḥadīth*] that has come down to us from the Chief of Mankind [*Sayyid al-Bashar*]:³⁰⁷

This world is ever deceiving, fickle, and harmful.³⁰⁸

Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has told us:

O mankind, be careful to observe	<i>yā ayyuha 'n-nāsu 'ttaqū</i>
your duty to your Lord,	<i>Rabba-kum</i>
and dread a day	<i>wa 'kshaw yawman</i>
when no parent shall give	<i>lā yajzi wālidum</i>
satisfaction on his child's behalf,	<i>'an waladi-hi</i>
and no child shall	<i>wa lā mawlūdum</i>
give any satisfaction whatsoever	<i>huwa jāzin 'an wāli-di-hi shai'ā:</i>

³⁰⁷ That is to say, from Allāh's Messenger, the Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

³⁰⁸ *inna 'd-dunyā taghurru tamurru wa taḍurru.*

for his parent. Allāh's promise is true indeed, so do not let the life of this world delude you, and do not let the Deceiver deceive you in regard to Allāh. (31:33)

inna wa' da 'llāhi haqqun fa-lā taghurranna-kumu 'l-hayātu 'd-dunyā: wa lā yaghurranna-kum bi-'llāhi 'l-gharūr.

The Deceiver [*al-Gharūr*]³⁰⁹ is none other than Satan the accursed [*ash-Shaitān ar-rajīm*]. [From him we take refuge with] Allāh, Allāh, and then again Allāh!

You must be on your guard against the pitfalls that lead to perdition and ruination. You must faithfully observe the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], as well as all the other commandments, and you must beware of infringing any of the prohibitions [imposed by the Sacred Law]. You must refrain from sinful behavior, in private as well as in public. You must surrender to your Lord, by accepting with resignation whatever has been destined for you and for other people. You must submit to your Lord, through obedience to Him in whatever He commands or forbids you to do. You must not distance yourself from Him, by committing that which he has forbidden you to perpetrate. You must not incur His displeasure, by remonstrating with Him against the course He has prepared for you, and by refusing to be satisfied with what He has allotted to you in the form of worldly goods and means of livelihood, and with the actions He has taken for your sake. He has hidden from you some of the benefits that will eventually accrue from those actions, and He has concealed from you their ultimate consequences, but some of their finest fruits and beneficial results will soon become apparent to you.

He has said (More Glorious is He than any other sayēr):

But it may happen that you hate a thing that is good for you, and it may happen that you love a thing which is bad for you. Allāh knows, and you know not. (2:216)

wa 'asā an takrahū shai' ān wa huwa khairun la-kum: wa 'asā an tu'ibbū shai' an wa huwa sharrun la-kum: wa 'llāhu ya'lamu wa antum lā ta'lamūn.

You must always be obedient to your Master [*Mawlā*], content with His verdict, patient in the face of His trials and tribulations, grateful for

³⁰⁹ Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has also mentioned the Deceiver [*al-Gharūr*] in the following verse [*āya*] of the Qur'ān:

And wishful expectations beguiled you until the ordinance of Allāh came to pass, and the Deceiver deceived you concerning Allāh. (57:14)

wa gharrakumu 'l-amāniyyu hattā jā' a amru 'llāhi wa gharrakum bi-'llāhi 'l-Gharūr.

His blessings, invoking His Names, remembering His gracious favors and His revelations [*āyāt*], harmonizing with His work [*fi‘l*] and His will [*murād*], and harboring no doubts concerning the wisdom of His management [*tadbīr*], as it applies to you, and as it applies to His entire creation. You must make this your constant practice, until death comes to claim you, for then you will be taken from this world in the company of the good [*at-tayyibīn*], you will be resurrected in the company of the Prophets [*al-Anbiyā’*], and you will enter the Gardens of Bliss, by the Mercy of the Lord of All the Worlds [*Rabb al-‘Ālamīn*], and by the Will of the God of the First and the Last [*Ilāh al-Awwalīn wa ‘l-Ākhirīn*].



31. Concerning the ritual prayer of the spiritual elite [*ṣalāt al-khāṣṣa*].

As for the ritual prayer of the spiritual elite [*ṣalāt al-khāṣṣa*], it serves to alert the wakeful, the humbly submissive, the vigilant, the guardians of hearts, the welcome guests of the All-Merciful [*ar-Raḥmān*] (may they enjoy the good pleasure of Allāh, and may His peace be upon them all). A good description of it is related in the following report:

Yūsuf ibn ‘Iṣām was passing through one of the large congregational mosques [*jāmi‘ min jawāmi‘*] of Khurāsān, when he came across an enormous circle [*ḥalqa*] of people. He stopped to ask someone about it, and he was told: “That is the circle of Ḥātīm. He is speaking on the subjects of abstinence [*zuḥd*] and pious caution [*wara‘*], and about fear and hope.”

Yūsuf then turned to his companions and said: “Come on, let us ask him a question on the subject of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]! Then, if he gives us a satisfying answer, we shall sit with him and join his circle.” He thereupon went up to Ḥātīm, saluted him with the greeting of peace [*sallama ‘alai-hi*], and said: “May Allāh bestow His mercy upon you [*raḥīma-ka’llāh*]! I have a question I wish to put to you.” “Go ahead and ask it,” said Ḥātīm, and the following conversation then took place between the two of them:

Yūsuf said: “I wish to ask you about the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”

Ḥātīm said: “Do you wish to ask me about its significance as a spiritual experience [*ma‘rifā*], or about the discipline [*adab*] to be observed in its performance? There are two distinct questions here, requiring two separate answers.”

Yūsuf said: “In that case, let me ask you about the discipline [*adab*] to be observed in its performance.”

Ḥātīm said: “It means that you rise to the occasion, and walk [to the place of worship] with an attitude of total dedication [*iḥtisāb*]. It means

that you begin the actual prayer with the appropriate intention [*niyya*], and pronounce the declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [by saying 'Allāhu Akbar'] in a spirit of glorification [*tukabbiru bi't-ta'zīm*]. It means that you recite [from the Qur'ān] with a clear and distinct enunciation [*tartīl*].³¹⁰ It means that you perform the act of bowing with humility [*tarka'u bi'l-khushū'*], the act of prostration with submissiveness [*tasjudu bi't-tawādu'*], the testimony with sincerity [*tatashahhadu bi'l-ikhhlās*], and the salutation with a feeling of compassion [*tusallimu bi'r-raḥma*]."

Yūsuf's companions then prompted him to ask about its significance as a spiritual experience [*ma'rifa*], so he went ahead and asked this second question, to which Ḥātim responded by explaining:

"It means that you set the Garden of Paradise to your right, the Fire of Hell to your left, the Bridge [*aṣ-Ṣirāt*] beneath your feet, and the Balance [*al-Mīzān*] beneath your eyes, and [that you worship] the Lord as if you could see Him, for, even if you do not see Him, He does see you."

"O young man [*yā shābb*]," said Yūsuf, "how long have you been performing this kind of ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]?"

"For twenty years," said Ḥātim.

Yūsuf said to his companions: "Come now, let us commit ourselves to performing such a prayer [*ṣalāt*] for the next fifty years!"

Then he turned to Ḥātim and asked him: "Where did you find out about this?"

Ḥātim replied: "From those books of yours, which you used to dictate to us!"

The traditional report [*ḥadīth*] of Abū Ḥāzim al-A'raj ["the Lame"] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is highly relevant to this whole topic, so we shall now proceed to recount it.

To quote the actual words of Abū Ḥāzim al-A'raj (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him):

"One day, while I was at the seashore, one of the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) came up to me and said: 'O Abū Ḥāzim, do you know how to perform the ritual prayer [*a-tuḥsinu an tuṣalliya*]?"

"How could I not know how to perform the ritual prayer,' said I, 'since I am thoroughly familiar with its strictly obligatory elements [*farā'id*],

³¹⁰ In the technical vocabulary of *tajwīd* [the art of reciting the Qur'ān], the term *tartīl* is applied to the slowest and most deliberate of the three rates of recitation.

as well as with the customary observances [*ma' stanna*] established by Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace)?

“O Abū Ḥāzim,’ he then said to me, ‘what is required of you, as an obligatory duty [*farḍ*], before you stand ready to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]?’

“There are six requirements,’ I replied.

“What are they?’ he asked.

“I said: ‘They are (1) a state of ritual purity [*ṭahāra*], (2) covering oneself [to conceal the private parts] [*istitār*], (3) choosing a suitable spot on which to perform the prayer [*ikhtiyār mawḍi‘ aṣ-ṣalāt*], (4) standing ready to perform the prayer [*al-qiyām ila ‘ṣ-ṣalāt*], (5) formulating the intention [*niyya*], and (6) facing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka‘ba in Mecca].’

“O Abū Ḥāzim,’ he asked me next, ‘with what intention [*niyya*] do you set out from your house toward the mosque [*masjid*]?’

“I said: ‘With the intention to visit [the place of worship] [*bi-niyyat az-ziyāra*].’

“He said: ‘With what intention [*niyya*] do you enter the mosque [*masjid*]?’

“I said: ‘With the intention to perform an act of worship [*bi-niyyat al-‘ibāda*].’

“He said: ‘With what intention [*niyya*] do you stand ready to perform the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]?’

“I said: ‘With the intention of servitude [*bi-niyyat al-‘ubūdiyya*], acknowledging the state of servitude to Him.’”

Abū Ḥāzim (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) then continued his account of his conversation with the Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“He came closer to me, and said: ‘O Abū Ḥāzim, with what do you confront the *Qibla*?’

“I said: ‘With three obligatory observances [*farā'id*] and one customary practice [*sunna*].’

“He said: ‘And what are they?’

“I said: ‘Facing toward the *Qibla* is an obligatory observance [*farḍ*]. Formulating the intention [*niyya*] is an obligatory observance [*farḍ*]. The initial declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*at-takbīrat al-ūlā*]³¹¹

³¹¹ This initial declaration—“*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]”—is often called the consecratory declaration of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-ihrām*].

is also an obligatory observance [*farḍ*]. The act of raising the hands³¹² is a customary practice [*sunna*].’

“He said: ‘In how many instances is pronouncing the declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*] required of you as an obligatory observance [*farḍ*], and how often as a customary practice [*sunna*]?’

“I said: ‘The basic principle of *takbīr* [the affirmation of the Supreme Greatness of Allāh] is expressed through ninety-four *takbīra*’s [utterances of the declaration: “*Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is Supremely Great!)”]. Five of these are strictly obligatory [*farḍ*], while all the rest of them are customary [*sunna*].’

“He said: ‘With what do you mark the opening of the ritual prayer [*bi-mā tastaftīhu* ‘*ṣ-ṣalāt*]?’

“I said: ‘With the affirmation of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*bi’ t-takbīr*].’

“He said: ‘And what [element of the prayer] is its manifest proof [*burhān*]?’

“I said: ‘Its Qur’ānic recitation [*qirā’a*].’

“He said: ‘And what is its jewel, its very essence [*jawhar*]?’

“I said: ‘Its glorification [of the Lord] [*tasbīḥ*].’

“He said: ‘And what is its animation [*iḥyā’a*]?’

“I said: ‘Its humble submission [*khushū’a*].’

“He said: ‘And what is its humble submission [*khushū’a*]?’

“I said: ‘Fixing one’s gaze on the spot where the act of prostration [*sujūd*] is to be performed.’

“He said: ‘And what is its solemn dignity [*waqār*]?’

“I said: ‘Its state of calm tranquillity [*sukūn*].’

“He said: ‘And what is its consecration [*taḥrīm*]?’

“I said: ‘The [initial] declaration of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*].’

“He said: ‘And what is its deconsecration [*taḥlīl*]?’

“I said: ‘The [concluding] salutation [*taslīm*].’

“He said: ‘And what is its emblem [*shī’ār*]?’

“I said: ‘The glorification [of the Lord] [*tasbīḥ*] when its performance has been duly completed.’

³¹² See Vol. 1, p. 15, where Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained:

This means that one’s hands are brought up close to the shoulders, the thumbs are held beside the lobes of the ears, and the tips of the fingers next to upper parts of the ears. Then the hands are lowered again.

“He said: ‘And what is the key to all of that, O Abū Ḥāzim?’

“I said: ‘The ritual ablution [*wuḍūʿ*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to the ritual ablution [*miftāḥ al-wuḍūʿ*]?’

“I said: ‘The invocation of Allāh’s Name [*tasmiya*].’³¹³

“He said: ‘And what is the key to the invocation of Allāh’s Name [*miftāḥ at-tasmiya*]?’

“I said: ‘The intention [*niyya*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to the intention [*miftāḥ an-niyya*]?’

“I said: ‘Certitude [*yaqīn*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to certitude [*miftāḥ al-yaqīn*]?’

“I said: ‘Absolute trust [in the Lord] [*tawakkul*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to absolute trust [*miftāḥ at-tawakkul*]?’

“I said: ‘Fear [*khawf*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to fear [*miftāḥ al-khawf*]?’

“I said: ‘Hope [*rajāʿ*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to hope [*miftāḥ ar-rajāʿ*]?’

“I said: ‘Patience [*ṣabr*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to patience [*miftāḥ aṣ-ṣabr*]?’

“I said: ‘Contentment [*riḍā*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to contentment [*miftāḥ ar-riḍā*]?’

“I said: ‘Worshipful obedience [*tāʿa*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to worshipful obedience [*miftāḥ at-tāʿa*]?’

“I said: ‘Acknowledgment [of truth and reality] [*iʿtirāf*].’

“He said: ‘And what is the key to acknowledgment [of truth and reality] [*miftāḥ al-iʿtirāf*]?’

“I said: ‘Acknowledgment of the Divine Oneness and Lordship [*al-iʿtirāf biʾl-waḥdāniyya waʾr-rubūbiyya*].’

“He said: ‘And by what means did you become acquainted with all of that?’

“I said: ‘Through knowledge [*ilm*].’

“He said: ‘And by what means did you acquire knowledge [*ilm*]?’

“I said: ‘Through the process of learning [*taʿallum*].’

“He said: ‘And by what means did you pursue the process of learning [*taʿallum*]?’

“I said: ‘Through intelligence [*aql*].’

³¹³ The *tasmiya* [invocation of Allāh’s Name] is pronounced by saying: “*Bismiʾllāh* [In the Name of Allāh].”

“He said: ‘And by what means did you acquire intelligence [‘*aql*]?’

“I said: ‘There are two kinds of intelligence [*al-‘aql ‘aqlān*]. For the making of one kind of intelligence, Allāh is solely responsible, to the exclusion of His creatures. The other kind of intelligence is one that human beings can develop, through the discipline of training and education. When the two kinds are combined together as a team, each of them assists and supports the other.’

“He said: ‘And by what means did you accomplish all of that?’

“I said: ‘Through the enabling grace [of Allāh] [*tawfiq*]. May Allāh enable us, and you, to succeed in achieving that which is worthy of love and approval.’

“Then he said: ‘By Allāh, you have already perfected the keys to the Garden of Paradise! So let me hear your answers to the following questions: (1) What is the obligatory duty [*farḍ*] that you must perform? (2) What is the obligatory duty of the obligatory duty [*farḍ al-farḍ*]? (3) What is an obligatory duty that leads to an obligatory duty [*farḍ yu‘addi ilā farḍ*]? (4) What is the customary practice [*sunna*] that is included within the obligatory duty [*farḍ*]? (5) What is a customary practice [*sunna*] by which the obligatory duty [*farḍ*] is completed?’

“I answered his questions as follows: ‘(1) As for the obligatory duty [*farḍ*], that is the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. (2) As for the obligatory duty of the obligatory duty [*farḍ al-farḍ*], that is the state of ritual purity [*ṭahāra*]. (3) As for an obligatory duty that leads to an obligatory duty [*farḍ yu‘addi ilā farḍ*], that refers to your taking water in your right hand, and using it to wash your left hand. (4) As for the customary practice [*sunna*] that is included within the obligatory duty [*farḍ*], that refers to your making water flow between your fingers and toes [when performing the ritual ablution]. (5) As for a customary practice [*sunna*] by which the obligatory duty [*farḍ*] is completed, that is circumcision [*khitān*].’

“He said: ‘You have not left yourself vulnerable to any charge that might be brought against you, O Abū Ḥāzim! Now let me ask you this: ‘How many duties, obligatory [*farḍ*] and customary [*sunna*], are you required to observe in connection with the consumption of food?’

“I said: ‘Are there obligatory and customary observances [*farḍ wa sunna*] connected with the consumption of food?’

“He said: ‘Yes, there are. Four of them are obligatory [*farḍ*], four are customary [*sunna*], and four are acts of courtesy [*makrūma*].’

“1. As for the four that are obligatory [*farḍ*], they are: (a) the invocation of Allāh’s Name [*tasmiya*]; (b) giving praise [to Allāh] [*ḥamd*]; (c) giving thanks [to Allāh] [*shukr*]; and (d) the conscious recognition [*maʿrifa*] of that which Allāh has provided for you to eat.

“2. As for the four that are customary [*sunna*], they are: (a) sitting so that your weight is supported on your left thigh; (b) eating with three fingers; (c) thoroughly chewing your food; and (d) licking your fingers.

“3. As for the four that are acts of courtesy [*makrūma*] they are: (a) washing your hands; (b) taking small mouthfuls; (c) eating from the part of the dish that is close to you; and (d) seldom looking at the person who is sitting and eating beside you. Such was the practice of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace).”

* * * * *

This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning
the five daily ritual prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*],
the times times prescribed for their performance,
their customary elements [*sunan*],
and their special qualities.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[*al-ḥamdu li’llāhi Rabbi ’l-’ālamīn*].



CHAPTER NINE

In this Chapter we provide a concise treatment of certain special ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*], namely:

1. The ritual prayer of the Friday congregation [*ṣalāt al-jum‘a*].
2. The ritual prayer of each of the Two Festivals [*ṣalāt al-‘Īdain*].
3. The ritual prayer for relief from drought [*ṣalāt al-istisqā’*].
4. The ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun [*ṣalāt al-kusūf*].
and at the eclipse of the moon [*ṣalāt al-khusūf*].
5. The ritual prayer in time of danger [*ṣalāt al-khawf*].
6. The shortened version of the ritual prayer [*qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt*].
7. The combination of two ritual prayers [*al-jam‘ baina ‘ṣ-ṣalātain*].
8. The ritual prayer at the funeral service [*aṣ-ṣalāt ‘ala ‘l-jināza*].



1. Concerning the ritual prayer of the Friday congregation [*ṣalāt al-jum‘a*].

As for the ritual prayer of the Friday congregation [*ṣalāt al-jum‘a*], the necessity [*wujūb*]³¹⁴ of its performance is based on the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the prayer on the Day of Congregation, hasten to the remembrance of Allāh and leave trading aside. That is better for you, if you did but know. (62:9)

*yā ayyuha ‘lladhīna āmanū
idhā nūdiya li’-ṣ-ṣalāti
min yawmi ‘l-jumu‘ati
fa-’s‘aw ilā dhikri ‘llāhi
wa dharu ‘l-bai‘:
dhālikum khairun la-kum
in kuntum ta‘lamūn.*

It is also based on the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

If someone fails to attend the Friday congregation [*jum‘a*] on three [consecutive] occasions, without having a valid excuse to offer, Allāh will stamp a seal on his heart.

The duty to attend the Friday congregational prayer [*farḍ al-jum‘a*] is incumbent, therefore, upon every individual for whom the five daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*]³¹⁵ are obligatory—provided that he is a permanent local resident [*mustawṭin*], settled in a town or in a rural community [*qarya jāmi‘a*], in which there is a population of at least forty legally mature males, all of whom must be of sound mind, and all of whom must be free men.

³¹⁴ The noun *wujūb* corresponds to the adjectival form *wājib*, which is applied—as a technical term of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*—to a religious duty that is “necessary,” but which cannot be classed as “absolutely obligatory” [*farḍ*].

³¹⁵ Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted an earlier Chapter to the subject of the five daily prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*]. (See pp. 110–238.)

If he resides in a village or settlement in which there are fewer than forty men, and his situation is such that he can hear the call [*nidā'*] from another village, or a town or city, from which he is separated by the distance of a league [*farsakh*],³¹⁶ it is incumbent upon him to go there.

It is not permissible for him to absent himself from it [the Friday congregational prayer], unless he has a valid excuse. Under certain circumstances, he will be excused for failing to attend, not only this, but also the congregational performance of all other [prescribed] prayers [*ṣalawāt*]. This exemption will apply in cases like the following:

1. He is sick.
2. He has reason to fear the loss or destruction of some property of his.
3. He has reason to fear the death or disappearance of a close relative.
4. His freedom of movement is restricted by a serious problem connected with the bladder and the bowel, or one of the two.
5. A meal has been prepared for him, and he is urgently in need of it.
6. He has reason to fear being arrested by a worldly authority, or being grabbed by a creditor who is constantly harassing him, when he has nothing on him to give the man.
7. He is getting ready to travel, and is afraid of missing his caravan.
8. He is afraid of damage to his property, or hopes to locate its whereabouts by staying away from the Friday congregation [*jum'a*], as well as other congregational attendance [*jamā'a*].
9. Sleepiness [*nu'ās*] overwhelms him, so that he misses the prescribed time.
10. He is afraid of being badly affected by the rain, the mud, and the strong wind.

The Friday congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jum'a*] consists of two cycles [*rak'atān*], performed after the sermon [*khutba*]³¹⁷ and together with the prayer leader [*imām*]. If someone misses it, he must perform a noon prayer [*ẓuhr*] of four cycles.³¹⁸ He may do this either by himself, if he so wishes, or as a member of a congregational group.

³¹⁶ The *farsakh* [parasang, or league] is three miles of the Hāshimī measure, i.e. thirty bow-shots reckoning the bow-shot as four hundred cubits, or sixty bow-shots reckoning the bow shot as two hundred cubits. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. F-R-S-KH.)

³¹⁷ Since this sermon is delivered in two parts, it is sometimes referred to as “the two sermons [*al-khutbatān*].” (See, for instance, p. 242 below.)

³¹⁸ The regular noon prayer [*ṣalāt aẓ-ẓuhr*], which is one of the five prescribed prayers [*aṣ-ṣalāt al-khams*] on the other days of the week, is replaced on a Friday by the congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jum'a*][—]except, as noted here, for those who fail to attend the latter.

The appropriate time for it is before the sun's decline from the meridian, coinciding with the time when the ritual prayer of the Festival [*ṣalāt al-ʿĪd*] is performed. According to some of our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, [it should be performed] in the fifth hour [of daylight].

One prerequisite, without which it cannot be convened, is the presence of forty men, from among those on whom it is incumbent to perform the Friday congregational prayer [*al-jumʿa*].³¹⁹ (According to one reported version [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine], the required number is fifty, and according to another it is only thirty.)

In the course of its performance, it is customary³²⁰ to pronounce the Qurʾānic recitation in an audible voice [*jahr*]. It is also customary for that recitation to consist of the Sūra of the Congregation [*Sūrat al-Jumuʿa*]³²¹ —after the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*]—in the first cycle, and the Sūra of the Hypocrites [*Sūrat al-Munāfiqīn*]³²² in the second cycle.

Is it necessary to obtain official authorization [*idhn al-imām*]? On this point, there are two [conflicting] accounts of the [Ḥanbalī] doctrine.

One of the preconditions for the valid performance of the Friday congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jumʿa*] is that it must be preceded by the two sermons [*al-khuṭbatān*].

It has no customary ritual prayer [*sunna*] to precede it. As for the one that may be performed afterwards, it should consist of at least two cycles [*rakʿatān*], and of six cycles at the very most. There is a tradition [*ḥadīth*] to this effect, reported by some of the Companions (may Allāh be well pleased with them all), who attribute it to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). According to a certain scholar, however, one of those well versed in the knowledge of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), the recommended practice is to perform twelve cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer in advance of the Friday congregational prayer [*ṣalāt al-jumʿa*], and six cycles after it.

³¹⁹ That is to say, they must be legally mature, of sound mind, and free men.

³²⁰ By “customary” we mean following the exemplary custom [*Sunna* in Arabic] of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

³²¹ The Sūra of the Congregation [*Sūrat al-Jumuʿa*] takes its title from the verse [*āya*] quoted at the beginning of this Chapter (p. 240 above).

³²² The Sūra entitled “The Hypocrites” [*Sūrat al-Munāfiqīn*] is the 63rd Sūra of the Qurʾān.

As soon as the call to prayer [*adhān*] has been delivered beside the pulpit [*minbar*], everyone must desist from buying and selling, in accordance with the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

<p>O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the prayer on the Day of Congregation, hasten to the remembrance of Allāh and leave trading aside. (62:9)</p>	<p><i>yā ayyuha 'lladhīna āmanū</i> <i>idhā nūdiya li' s-ṣalāti</i> <i>min yawmi 'l-jumu'ati</i> <i>fa-'s'aw ilā dhikri 'llāhi</i> <i>wa dharu 'l-bai':</i></p>
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This is a reference to the call to prayer [*adhān*] as it was delivered [beside the pulpit] in the lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). It is necessary [*wājib*]³²³ according to our understanding of the [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, while others maintain that it is a collective duty [*farḍ 'ala 'l-kifāya*].³²⁴ He [Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] is also reported as having declared it a customary practice [*sunna*].

As for the call to prayer delivered from the minaret [*adhān al-manāra*],³²⁵ it was ordained by 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) during his time [as Caliph],³²⁶ as a measure to promote the public interest [*li-maṣlaḥa 'amma*], its purpose being to

³²³ In the technical vocabulary of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], the term *wājib* is applied to a religious duty that is "necessary," but which cannot be classed as "absolutely obligatory" [*farḍ*].

³²⁴ In Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], a distinction is drawn between *farḍ 'ain*, i.e., a religious duty that is incumbent on every individual Muslim, and *farḍ 'ala 'l-kifāya*, meaning a collective duty, incumbent on the Islāmic community as a whole, though not on every individual Muslim. As Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has pointed out in an earlier Chapter of the present work, duties classed as *farḍ 'ain* include the obligation to acquire knowledge of the rules governing the five fundamentals or "pillars," namely, the profession of faith [*shahāda*]; the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]; the alms-due [*zakāt*]; fasting [*ṣawm*] during the month of Ramaḍān; and the pilgrimage [*hajj*]. There is also an obligation to study subjects that go beyond these fundamentals, but the pursuit of "higher learning" is an example of a collective duty [*farḍ 'ala 'l-kifāya*], which can be discharged by qualified experts on behalf of the community as a whole. (See Vol. 1, n. 63, p. 87.)

³²⁵ The words *ma' dhana* and *mi' dhana*—derived from the same root, 'dh-n, as *adhān* [the call to prayer] and *mu' adhdhin* [muezzin, one who gives the call to prayer]—are also used in Arabic as synonyms for *manāra* [minaret].

³²⁶ The Caliphate [*Khilāfa*] of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) began in A.H. 23/643 C.E., when he succeeded 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as Commander of the Believers [Amīr al-Mu'minīn], and ended when he was assassinated in A.H. 35/656 C.E., at the age of eighty-two. He is often referred to as Dhu 'n-Nūrain [He of the Two Lights], in honor of the fact that he married two daughters of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace): first Ruqayya, then, after her death, which occurred during the Battle of Badr, her sister Umm Kulthūm (may Allāh be well pleased with them).

Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has described his succession to the Caliphate in an earlier Chapter of the present work. (See Vol. 1, pp. 261-62.)

broadcast to people outside the main urban centers [*amṣār*]³²⁷ and the smaller towns, thereby preventing invalid commercial transactions.

As soon as the worshipper enters the congregational mosque [*jāmiʿ*], he is recommended—provided there is time to spare—to perform four cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer [*rakaʿāt*], in the course of which he should recite “*Qul Huwaʿllāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”³²⁸ two hundred times (that is to say, fifty times in each cycle). This practice is recommended on good authority, because the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

If someone does this, he will not die without having seen his place of abode in the Garden of Paradise, or having been absolved [of all sin].

This saying was reported by Ibn ʿUmar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father).

[It is also recommended that] whenever he enters the congregational mosque [*jāmiʿ*], the worshipper should not sit down until he has performed two cycles of [voluntary] ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*]; only then may he sit down.

We have already mentioned the special qualities of the Friday, the Day of the Congregation [*al-Jumʿa*], described how one should behave when setting out for the congregational mosque [*jāmiʿ*], and discussed all other relevant topics, in earlier sections of the present work.³²⁹



³²⁷ The *amṣār* were the regional capitals established in places like Kūfa and Baṣra, in the wake of the rapid expansion of Islām beyond the confines of Arabia.

³²⁸ Sūra 112.

³²⁹ For the passages alluded to here by Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him), see Vol. 1, pp. 83–84, and Vol. 3 pp. 295–325).

2. Concerning the ritual prayer of the Two Festivals [*ṣalāt al-ʿĪdain*].³³⁰

As for the ritual prayer of the Two Festivals [*ṣalāt al-ʿĪdain*], it is a collective duty [*fard ʿalaʿl-kifāya*].³³¹ Provided that it is performed by a congregation [*jamāʿa*] attended by some of the inhabitants of a given locality, the duty is thereby discharged as far as the rest of them are concerned. If the inhabitants unanimously agree to omit its performance, however, the Leader of the Islamic Community [*al-Imām*] must take forceful action to combat them, until they repent.

The time prescribed for its performance begins when the sun has risen, and ends when the sun has declined from the meridian. Its performance on the early side is recommended, in the case of the Festival of Sacrifices [*ʿĪd al-Aḏḥā*], for the sake of the animal to be sacrificed [*uḏḥiya*]. In the case of the Festival of Fastbreaking [*ʿĪd al-Fiṭr*], on the other hand, it is preferable to delay, since this is not a factor to be considered.

Its preconditions of validity include permanent local residence [*istitān*], a sufficient number [of qualified males], and official authorization [*idhn al-imām*], as in the case of the Friday congregational prayer [*al-jumʿa*]. According to another account of his doctrine, however, our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal]³³² (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) maintained that none of that is stipulated. This latter view is also held

³³⁰ The Two Festivals [*al-ʿĪdān-ain*] are the Festival of Fastbreaking [*ʿĪduʿl-Fiṭr*] at the end of the month of Ramaḏān, and the Festival of Sacrifices [*ʿĪduʿl-Aḏḥā*] in Dhuʿl-Ḥijja, the month of Pilgrimage.

³³¹ See note 324 on p. 243 above.

³³² Imām Abū ʿAbdiʿllāh Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal ash-Shaibānī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was the founder of one of the four schools [*madhāhib*] of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in the year A.H. 241/855 C.E. The legal doctrines of the Ḥanbalī school were those studied most intensively by the author, Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as a young man.

by the school [*madhhab*] of Imām ash-Shāfi‘ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

Those who attend are recommended to arrive early, to wear elegant clothes, and to perfume themselves, as we have mentioned previously, in connection with the special qualities of Friday, the Day of Congregational Prayer [*al-Jum‘a*].³³³

The most appropriate setting for its performance is a large space in the open air,³³⁴ and it is considered improper to convene it inside the congregational mosque [*jāmi‘*], unless there is a valid pretext for doing so.

There is no objection to the attendance of women.

The most appropriate course is to make one’s way to the site on foot, and then to return home by a different route. We have mentioned the reason [*‘illa*] for this in our discussion of the special qualities of the Two Festivals [*al-‘Īdain*].³³⁵

The summons to it is the cry:

The ritual prayer is being convened! *aṣ-ṣalātu jāmi‘a*.³³⁶

[The ritual prayer of the Two Festivals] consists of two cycles [*rak‘atān*]. In the first cycle, seven affirmations of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīrāt*] are proclaimed,³³⁷ after the introductory invocation [*du‘ā’ al-istiftāḥ*],³³⁸ but before the plea for refuge with Allāh [*ta‘awwudh*].³³⁹ In the second cycle, five affirmations of Allāh’s Supreme

³³³ See Vol. 3, pp. 295–325, where Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted a lengthy Discourse to the special qualities of Friday, the Day of Congregational Prayer [*al-Jum‘a*].

³³⁴ Literally, “in the desert [*ṣaḥrā’*].”

³³⁵ See Vol. 3, pp. 146–49, 162–65 and 276–77.

³³⁶ This brief announcement takes the place of the usual call to prayer [*adhān*].

³³⁷ The affirmation of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness is expressed by declaring: “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]” The general term for this affirmation is *takbīr*. A specific utterance thereof is called a *takbīra*, and the form *takbīrāt* is the plural of *takbīra*.

³³⁸ The introductory invocation [*du‘ā’ al-istiftāḥ*], is often referred to simply as *al-istiftāḥ* or *al-iftitāḥ* [the introduction]. It is uttered quietly, in the following words:

Allāh is Supremely Great, immensely so!	<i>Allāhu Akbar kabīrā:</i>
And praise be to Allāh, abundantly!	<i>wa l-ḥamdu li’llāhi kathīrā:</i>
And glory be to Allāh, both early and late.	<i>wa subḥāna’llāhi bukratan wa aṣīlā:</i>

³³⁹ The plea for refuge with Allāh [*ta‘awwudh*] is made by uttering the words:

I take refuge with Allāh	<i>a‘ūdhu bi’llāhi</i>
from Satan the accursed.	<i>mina’sh-shaiṭāni’r-rajīm.</i>

Greatness [*takbīrāt*] are proclaimed, before the Qurʾānic recitation. With each affirmation [*takbīra*], the worshipper raises his hands [to the lobes of his ears] and says:

Allāh is Supremely Great, immensely so!	<i>Allāhu Akbar</i>
And praise be to Allāh, abundantly!	<i>kabīrā:</i>
And glory be to Allāh, both early and late.	<i>wa 'l-ḥamdu li' llāhi kathīrā:</i>
And Allāh's blessings upon our Master	<i>wa subḥāna 'llāhi</i>
Muḥammad the Prophet, and his family,	<i>bukratan wa aṣīlā:</i>
and may He grant [him] peace.	<i>wa ṣalawātu 'llāhi</i>
	<i>'alā Sayyidi-nā</i>
	<i>Muḥammadini 'n-Nabiyyi</i>
	<i>wa āli-hi</i>
	<i>wa sallama taslīmā.</i>

When he has finished affirming Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*], he must seek refuge with Him [*ista'ādha*], and recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*]. Then [in the first cycle] he should recite [the Sūra that begins with the words]: “*Sabbiḥi 'sma Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā... [Glorify the Name of your Lord the Most High...]*”³⁴⁰ In the second cycle, he should recite [the Sūra that begins with the words]: “*Hal atā-ka ḥadīthu 'l-ghāshiya [Have you received the story of the Calamity?]*”³⁴¹

As an acceptable alternative, he may recite, in the first cycle, [the Sūra that begins with the words]: “*Qāf: wa 'l-Qur'āni 'l-majīd [Qāf: By the glorious Qur'ān!]*”³⁴² and in the second cycle, [the Sūra that begins with the words]: “*Iqtarabati 's-sā'atu wa 'nshaqqa 'l-qamar [The Hour has drawn near and the moon has been split in two]*”³⁴³ A statement to this effect has been attributed to our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

The recitation of yet other Sūras [instead of those mentioned above] is also permissible.

Concerning the postponement of the introductory invocation [*al-istiftāḥ*] until the moment of the Qurʾānic recitation, there are likewise two [conflicting] reports. According to one of them, it should be pronounced immediately after the consecratory affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīrat al-iḥrām*]. According to the other,

³⁴⁰ That is to say, the Sūra of the Most High [*Sūrat al-A'lā*]. (Q. 87.)

³⁴¹ That is to say, the Sūra of the Calamity [*Sūrat al-Ghāshiya*]. (Q. 88.)

³⁴² That is to say, the Sūra entitled “Qāf” [*Sūra Qāf*]. (Q. 50.)

³⁴³ That is to say, the Sūra of the Moon [*Sūrat al-Qamar*]. (Q. 54.)

it should be deferred, together with the plea for refuge [*ta'awwudh*], until the moment of the Qur'ānic recitation.

When a worshipper takes part in the Festival prayer [*ṣalla 'l-Īd*], he should not concern himself with supererogatory ritual practices [*nawāfil mina 'ṣ-ṣalāt*], nor should he perform any [voluntary] prayer in advance of it. He should rather go home to his family, so that all of its members may rally together in his presence. He should be on his very best behavior with his family, and should make every effort to provide for them with extra generosity, because, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

The days of the Festival [*Īd*] are the days of eating, drinking, and cultivating family ties.

This applies to the two days of the Two Festivals [*Īd*], and also to the Days of Drying Meat [*Ayyām at-Tashrīq*].³⁴⁴

If they [the members of a local community] choose to perform it [the Festival prayer] in the mosque [*masjid*] [rather than in an open space], it is permissible for them to do so. When the worshipper enters the mosque, he should not sit down until he has performed the two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atain*] known as “the greeting of the mosque [*tahīyyat al-masjid*],” in accordance with the saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Whenever one of you enters the mosque, he should not sit down until he has performed two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atain*].

This applies to the two days of the Two Festivals [*Īd*], as well as to all other occasions.

When our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] propounded the ban on supererogatory observance [*tanafful*], he obviously assumed that the site of the prayer [*al-muṣallā*] would be in an open space, because it is traditionally reported, through several lines of transmission, that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) performed no ritual prayer beforehand, and none afterward. This was stated explicitly by [the Caliph] 'Umar [ibn al-Khaṭṭāb], by 'Abdu'llāh ibn 'Abbās, and by Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with them all). [On the days of the Two Festivals], the Prophet's own prayer [*ṣalāt an-Nabī*] (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was always performed at the [open-air] site of

³⁴⁴ The term *tashrīq* denotes the drying up of the blood from the animals sacrificed. The Days of Drying Meat [*Ayyām at-Tashrīq*] are the three days immediately following the Day of Sacrifice [*Yawm an-Nahr*].

prayer in the area of the burial ground [*al-muṣallā fi 'l-jabbāna*].³⁴⁵ Had it been in the mosque [*masjid*], he would certainly not (Allāh bless him and give him peace) have omitted [the two cycles of ritual prayer known as] the greeting of the mosque [*taḥiyyat al-masjid*].

If a worshipper misses the whole of the ritual prayer of the Festival [*ṣalāt al-ʿĪd*], it is considered commendable for him to make it up. In order to do so, he may adopt either of two options: He may perform four cycles, as in the forenoon prayer [*ṣalāt aḍ-ḍuḥā*],³⁴⁶ without the [multiple] affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*], or he may copy the format [of the Festival prayer], by including the [multiple] affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*].

All of this should rally his family and friends around him, and he will thereby earn considerable grace and favor.



³⁴⁵ As Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has informed us in Vol. 3, p. 147:

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

When the Day of Breaking the Fast [*Yawm al-Fiṭr*] comes around, and the people emerge from their homes to pray in the open space near the burial ground [*jabbāna*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will take notice of them, and He will say: "My servants, for My sake you have kept the fast, and for My sake you have performed the prayers. Now take your leave, knowing that you have been granted forgiveness!"

³⁴⁶ See note 98 on p. 83, also pp. 90–92 above.

3. Concerning the ritual prayer for relief from drought [*ṣalāt al-istisqāʿ*].

As for the ritual prayer for relief from drought [*ṣalāt al-istisqāʿ*], it is performed as a customary observance [*sunna*].

The prayer leader [*imām*] goes out [of town] to conduct it in the forenoon [*ḍahwa*], as he does in the case of the Two Festivals [*ʿĪdain*]. It closely resembles the ritual prayer of the Two Festivals [*ṣalāt al-ʿĪdain*] in all of its characteristic features, the site of its performance, and its rules [*aḥkāṃ*].

It is appropriate for those who attend it to be neatly dressed, and scrupulously purified of all forms of defilement and dirt. It is not appropriate for them to perfume themselves, however, because the situation calls for begging, self-abasement, and petitioning for relief that is sorely needed. What is recommended, therefore, is that they should set out to attend it in their everyday work-clothes [*thiyāb al-bidhla*], with an attitude of submissiveness, earnest entreaty, abject humility, contrition and sorrow. They should be accompanied by the old men and old women, the youths, and the handicapped members of their community.

They should also extricate themselves from acts of injustice, from liabilities incurred through misappropriation and other forms of misconduct, and from obligations owed to Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), such as alms-dues [*zakawāt*], vows [*nudhūr*], and expiations [*kaffārāt*]. They should do a great deal of charitable giving [*ṣadaqa*], and a great deal of fasting [*ṣiyām*]. They should renew their repentance [*tawba*], and commit themselves to steadfast perseverance in it until death. They should not affront the Lord (Glory be to Him) with sins, whether they be major [*kabīra*] or minor [*ṣaghīra*]. They should be modestly aware of Him (Almighty and Glorious is He) in

their private quarters, since there is no place so private as to be secluded from Him. No secret can be kept hidden from Him, neither on earth nor in heaven, for He is Aware of the secret and of all hidden things [*Huwa 'Ālimun bi-'s-sirri wa 'l-khafīyyāt*].³⁴⁷

It is likewise recommended that they should invoke the good offices of the pious abstainers [*ṣuḥḥād*], the righteous [*ṣāliḥīm*], and people devoted to learning, virtue and religion. This recommendation is based on the precedent set by [the Caliph] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him), when he once went out to pray for relief from drought [*kharaja yastasqī*]. As we learn from a traditional report, he took al-'Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him) by the hand, then turned his face toward the *Qibla* [the direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], and said: "O Allāh, this is the paternal uncle of our Prophet. We have come to appeal to You, invoking his good offices, so grant us water [*fa-'sqi-nā*] for his sake!" The reporter added: "And before they got back home, they were blessed with rain."

In order to grasp the point of this, one must understand that the withholding of rain is a chastisement, a requital for the sinful acts of disobedience committed by human beings [*ma'āṣi banī Ādam*]. This explains why [according to the traditional account]:

When the unbeliever [*kāfir*] dies and is buried in his grave, and when [the interrogating angels called] Munkir and Nakir come and ask him about his Lord [*Rabb*], his Prophet [*Nabi*] and his religion [*dīn*], and when he cannot answer their questions, the pair of them will beat him with an iron hammer [*mirzabba*]. This will cause him to yell so loud that his screams will be heard by all created beings, apart from the jinn and humankind. Every single thing will curse him, even the sheep held by the butcher, with the knife at its throat, for it will say: "May Allāh curse him! It was because of him that we were deprived of the rainfall!"

This is in keeping with the words of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He):

They will be cursed by Allāh,
and all who can curse will curse them.
(2:159)

*ulā'ika yal'anu-humu 'llāhu
wa yal'anu-humu 'l-lā'inūn.*

³⁴⁷ As Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us in His own words:

Say: "The death from which you flee
is bound to meet up with you;
then you will be returned
to the Knower of the unseen
and the visible,
and He will tell you
what you have been doing." (62:8)

*qul inna 'l-mawta 'lladhī tafirūna
min-hu fa-inna-hu mulāqī-kum
thumma turaddūna
ilā 'Ālimi 'l-ghaibi
wa 'sh-shahādati
fa-yunabbi'u-kum
bi-mā kuntum ta'malūn:*

For, when the human being [*ādami*] becomes corrupt, his corruption infects every other living creature, and when he behaves righteously, his righteousness extends its influence to everything. His corruption is the result of his sinful disobedience to his Lord, while his righteousness is the result of his worshipful obedience to Him (Almighty and Glorious is He).

[This is how the prayer must be performed]:

The Leader of the Community [*al-Imām*], or his deputy, must lead the people in a ritual prayer of two cycles [*rak'atain*], without a call to prayer [*adhān*], and without a last-minute announcement [*iqāma*].³⁴⁸

In the first cycle, he must pronounce the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness six times, in addition to the consecratory affirmation [*takbīrat al-ihrām*], and then five times in the second cycle, in addition to the affirmation uttered when rising from the posture of prostration [*takbīrat al-qiyām mina 's-sujūd*]. This should all be done in the manner we have described above, in connection with the Festival prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿĪd*].³⁴⁹ He must likewise extol Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) between every two affirmations of His Supreme Greatness [*takbīratain*].

As soon as he has finished leading the people in the ritual prayer [*idhā ṣallā bi-him*], he should deliver a sermon [*khuṭba*] to the assembled congregation. It is also permissible for him to deliver the sermon before the performance of the prayer [*ṣalāt*]. According to one account of the [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, he is free to choose either option. It is also reported that he [Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) maintained that he [the prayer leader] is not required to deliver any sermon at all on this occasion, and that he should simply offer a prayer of supplication [*yad'ū fa-ḥasb*].

The prayer leader [*imām*] should therefore do whatever is easiest and most convenient for him in this regard. If he does deliver a sermon, he should open it with the affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīr*], as he would in the case of the Festival sermon [*khuṭbat al-ʿĪd*], and he should repeat the invocation of blessings upon Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) many times over. In the course of his sermon, he should recite the Qur'ānic verses [*āyāt*]:

And I have said: "Seek forgiveness	<i>fa-qultu 'staghfirū</i>
from your Lord;	<i>Rabba-kum:</i>

³⁴⁸ The *iqāma*, the announcement that the ritual prayer is about to begin, is an abbreviated version of the *adhān* [call to prayer], with the addition of the words (repeated twice): *qad qāmati' ṣ-ṣalāh* [The prayer is about to begin!]

³⁴⁹ See pp. 246–47 above.

He is ever All-Forgiving, and He
will let loose the sky for you,
in plenteous rain
and He will succor you
with wealth and sons,
and He will assign unto you gardens,
and He will assign unto you rivers.”
(71:10–12)

*inna-hu kāna Ghaffārā
yursilu 's-samā'a
'alai-kum midrārā.
wa yumdid-kum
bi-amwālīn wa banīna
wa yaj'al la-kum jannātīn
wa yaj'al la-kum anhārā.*

When he has finished delivering his sermon, he should stand with his face toward the *Qibla*, then turn his cloak around, moving the part that was on his right shoulder over to the left, and the part that was on his left shoulder over to the right, without turning it upside down. All the people present should do likewise, and they should leave their cloaks reversed until they get back home to their families, at which point they may remove them, when they change their other clothes. They should do this as a gesture of optimism, betokening the transformation of the drought, and because the Tradition [*Sunna*] provides a precedent for it, as we know from the report of 'Abbād ibn Tamīm, whose paternal uncle (may Allāh be well pleased with him) told him:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) led the people out [into the desert] to pray for rain [*yastasqī*]. He then led them in the performance of two cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣallā bi-him rak'atain*], pronouncing the Qur'ānic recitation in an audible voice in each cycle. He reversed his cloak, offered a supplication [*da'ā*], prayed for rain [*istasqā*], and stood facing the *Qibla*.”

Then, having reversed his cloak, the prayer leader [*imām*] should raise his hands, facing the *Qibla* as he does so, and offer the prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] offered by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

O Allāh, grant us a rainfall
that is helpful,
wholesome, healthful, productive,
copious and widespread.³⁵⁰

*Allāhumma 'sqi-nā
ghaiṭhan
mughūṭhan marī'an hanī'an
marī'an ghadaqan mujallilā.*

O Allāh, grant us the gift of rain,
and do not include us
among the hopeless.

*Allāhumma 'sqi-na 'l-ghaiṭha
wa lā taj'al-nā
mina 'l-qāniṭīn:*

O Allāh, let it be a downpour of mercy,
not a downpour of torment,
nor of obliteration, nor of tribulation,
nor of destruction, nor of flooding.

*Allāhumma suqyā raḥmatīn
lā suqyā 'adhābīn
wa lā maḥqīn wa lā balā'in
wa lā hadmīn wa lā gharāq.*

³⁵⁰ **Author’s note:** According to one traditional report, the wording at this point should rather be:
widespread, general, layer-upon-layer,
streaming, continuous.

*mujallilan 'amman
tabaqan saḥḥan dā'imā*

O Allāh, in these lands,
and among [Your] servants
and creatures,
there is such great hardship
and affliction,
and so much trouble and distress,
that no complaint [is meaningful],
unless it be addressed to You.

O Allāh, irrigate the crops for us,
and cause the udders to yield
milk for us.
Let us drink from the bounty
of the sky,
and let the bounties of the earth
grow for us.

O Allāh, relieve us of the agony,
the hunger and the destitution,
and remove from us the suffering
that none but You can take away.

O Allāh,
we seek forgiveness from You.
Surely You are ever All-Forgiving,
so let loose the sky for us
in plenteous rain.³⁵¹

—He should likewise plead [*yad'ū*]:

O Allāh, You have
commanded us to appeal to You,
and You have promised us
Your response.
Now we have appealed
as You commanded us,
so respond to us as You promised us!

Allāhumma inna bi'l-bilādi
wa 'l-'ibādi
wa 'l-khalqī
mīna 'l-la' wā'i
wa 'l-balā'i
wa 'l-jahdi wa 'd-danki
mā lā shakwā
illā ilai-k.

Allāhumma anbit la-na 'z-zar'a
wa adirra
la-na 'd-dar'a
wa 'sqī-nā min barakati 's-
samā'i
wa anbit la-nā min
barakāti 'l-arḍ.

Allāhumma 'rfa' 'an-na 'l-juhda
wa 'l-jū'a wa 'l-'urya
wa 'kshif 'an-nā mīna 'l-balā'i
mā lā yakshifu-hu ghairu-k.

Allāhumma
innā nastaghfiru-ka
inna-ka kumta Ghaffārā:
fa-arsili 's-samā'a
'alai-nā midrārā.

Allāhumma inna-ka amarta-nā
amarta-nā bi-du'ā'i-ka
wa wa' adta-nā
ijābati-ka
fa-qad da'awnā
ka-mā amarta-nā
fa-'stajib la-nā ka-mā wa' adta-nā.

It has also been maintained that he should turn his face toward the *Qibla* while delivering the sermon, and that he should be facing the *Qibla* when he brings it to its conclusion, at which point he should follow it immediately with the prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*]. The most appropriate procedure, however, is the one we have already mentioned,

³⁵¹ This is the very plea invited by (Almighty and Glorious is He), in the words of the Qur'ānic recitation included in the sermon [*khuṭba*] referred to above, namely:

And I have said: "Seek forgiveness from your Lord; He is ever All-Forgiving, and He will let loose the sky for you in plenteous rain." (71:10,11)

fa-qultu 'staghfirū Rabba-kum:
inna-hu kāna Ghaffārā
yursilu 's-samā'a
'alai-kum midrārā.

namely, that he should finish delivering the sermon, and only then turn his face toward the *Qibla*. This is because the purpose of the sermon is to exhort, to admonish and to intimidate, and this can only be achieved if the preacher faces the people and addresses them directly, so that he can reach both their ears and their hearts. If he stands facing the *Qibla*, he will be turning his back on them again, as he had to do when he stood out in front and led them in the ritual prayer [*ṣallā bi-him*].



4. The ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun [*ṣalāt al-kusūf*] and at the eclipse of the moon [*ṣalāt al-khusūf*].

As for the ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun [*ṣalāt al-kusūf*], it is a firmly established custom [*sunna mu'akkada*].

The time for its performance lasts from the moment of the eclipse [*kusūf*] until the point of clarity, when the light is fully restored to the sun or the moon. That is to say, the period begins when the sun is eclipsed [*kasafat as-shams*], or when the moon is eclipsed [*khasafa 'l-qamar*].

In other words, the time of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] extends from the first appearance of blackness, opaqueness and diminished radiance, until the disappearance thereof, at which point the time of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] expires.

According to customary practice [*sunna*], this prayer should be performed in the congregational mosque [*jāmi'*], the site of the Friday prayer [*ṣalāt al-jum'a*].

The summons to it is the cry:

The ritual prayer is being convened! *aṣ-ṣalātu jāmi'a*.³⁵²

The prayer leader [*imām*] must lead the congregation in the performance of two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atain*]. In the first cycle, he should proceed as follows:

1. Pronounce the consecratory affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness.³⁵³
2. Pronounce the introductory invocation.³⁵⁴
3. Pronounce the the plea for refuge with Allāh.³⁵⁵

³⁵² As in the case of the prayer of the Two Festivals [*ṣalāt al-Ṭdāin*], this brief announcement takes the place of the usual call to prayer [*adhān*]. (See p. 246 above.)

³⁵³ See note 236 on p. 174 above.

³⁵⁴ See note 338 on p. 246 above.

³⁵⁵ The plea for refuge with Allāh [*ta'awudh*] is made by uttering the words:

I take refuge with Allāh	<i>a'ūdhu bi-'llāhi</i>
from Satan the accursed.	<i>mina 'sh-shaitāni 'r-raḡim.</i>

4. Recite the Opening Sūra of the Qur'ān [*al-Fātiḥa*].
5. Recite the Sūra of the Cow [*Sūrat al-Baqara*].³⁵⁶
6. Perform the act of bowing, and maintain the posture of bowing [*rukū'*] for a considerable period of time, while repeating the glorification of Allāh [*tasbīḥ*] for as long as it would take to recite one hundred verses [*āyāt*] of the Qur'ān.

7. Raise his head, saying as he does so:

May Allāh hear and accept	<i>sami'a 'llāhu</i>
the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>

8. Recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*] and the Sūra of the Family of 'Imrān [*Āl 'Imrān*].³⁵⁷

9. Perform a second act of bowing [*rukū'*], distinct from the first.

10. Raise his head, in the same way as before.

11. Perform two prolonged acts of prostration [*sajdatain*], repeating the glorification of Allāh [*tasbīḥ*], in each of the two, for as long as it would take to recite one hundred verses [*āyāt*] of the Qur'ān.

12. Stand erect, in readiness to perform the second cycle.

In the second cycle, he should recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*], followed by the Sūra of Women [*an-Nisā'*].³⁵⁸ Then he should perform the act of bowing, and maintain the posture of bowing [*rukū'*] for a considerable period of time. He should then straighten up, and recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*] and the Sūra of the Table [*al-Mā'ida*].³⁵⁹

If he is not proficient in the recitation of these long Sūras, he may recite other Sūras of the Qur'ān instead, so long as the verses [*āyāt*] add up to the same total number. If he only knows the Sūra that begins with “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']”,³⁶⁰ he should therefore recite it in precisely that manner.

³⁵⁶ The Sūra of the Cow [*Sūrat al-Baqara*] is the second Sūra of the Qur'ān. It consists of 286 verses [*āyāt*].

³⁵⁷ The Sūra of the Family of 'Imrān [*Sūrat Āl 'Imrān*] is the third Sūra of the Qur'ān. It consists of 200 verses [*āyāt*].

³⁵⁸ The Sūra of Women [*Sūrat an-Nisā'*] is the fourth Sūra of the Qur'ān. It consists of 177 verses [*āyāt*].

³⁵⁹ The Sūra of the Table [*Sūrat al-Mā'ida*] is the fifth Sūra of the Qur'ān. It consists of 120 verses [*āyāt*].

³⁶⁰ Sūra 112.

In the second upright posture, the length of his Qur'ānic recitation should be two thirds of his recitation in the first upright posture. In the third upright posture, the one he assumes on rising from the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], the length of his recitation should be half of his recitation in the first upright posture. In the final upright posture, i.e., the fourth, it should be two thirds the length of the recitation in the third upright posture, i.e., the one before it.

As for the glorification of Allāh [*tasbīh*], it should be the equivalent of two thirds of his recitation, in each upright posture. Once he has completed it, he should immediately adopt the bowing posture [*rukū'*]; there is no disagreement on this point.

Then [after the two final prostrations] he should conclude the prayer by pronouncing the salutation. Thus [in the complete prayer] there are four acts of bowing [*raka'āt*] and four acts of prostration [*sajadāt*], since the bowing posture [*rukū'*] is adopted twice in each cycle [*rak'a*].³⁶¹

If the eclipse departs while the people are still engaged in the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], the recommended practice is to complete a simplified version its performance, rather than discontinue it abruptly.

If a person wishes to perform this prayer at home, either by himself or with his family, it is permissible for him to do so. The preferable course, however, is the one we have described.

Our basic authority concerning the ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun [*ṣalāt al-kusūf*], as we have explained its performance, is the traditional account provided by 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), who is reported as having said:

“An eclipse of the sun occurred in the time of Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) came to the place of prayer [*muṣallā*]. He proclaimed the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*kabbara*], and the people did likewise. Then he recited from the Qur'ān, pronouncing his recitation in an audible voice. He remained standing erect for a considerable length of time, then he bowed down [*raka'a*] and maintained the bowing posture [*rukū'*] for a long time. Then he raised his head, and declared:

May Allāh hear and accept	<i>sami'a'llāhu</i>
the praise of one who praises Him!	<i>li-man ḥamidah.</i>

³⁶¹ The term *rak'a* [an act of bowing] has acquired an extended meaning, since it is generally used to denote the whole series of movements and postures—including the bowing posture [*rukū'*]—that constitute one cycle of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. (The dual and plural forms, corresponding to the singular form *rak'a*, are *rak'atān/-ain* and *raka'āt*, respectively.)

“Then he recited again from the Qur`ān, and continued his recitation for a long time. Then he bowed down [*rakā`a*] and maintained the bowing posture [*rukū`*] for a long time. Then he raised his head. Then he prostrated himself [*sajada*]. Then he stood up straight, and went on to perform the second [cycle of prayer] in similar fashion. Then he said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

“The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allāh’s [*āyatān min āyāti`llāh*]. They do not become eclipsed on account of someone’s death, nor on account of someone’s birth. So, if you see that [eclipse] occurring, take refuge at once in the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*].”



5. Concerning the ritual prayer in time of danger [*ṣalāt al-khawf*].

As for the ritual prayer in time of danger [*ṣalāt al-khawf*], its performance is permissible, provided that four preconditions are fulfilled, namely:

1. The enemy [who poses the danger] must be one against whom it is permissible to wage war.
2. The enemy must not be positioned directly in front of the *Qibla*⁴⁷² [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca].
3. There must be no security from attack by the enemy.
4. The numerical strength of the people [threatened by the enemy] must be sufficient to enable them to split into two contingents, with a minimum of three members to each contingent, so that one of the two contingents can be stationed in the face of the enemy, while the other lines up behind the prayer leader [*imām*].

The prayer leader [*imām*] should lead one contingent in one cycle of ritual prayer [*rak'a*]. Then, when he stands up [after the prostration], in readiness to perform the second cycle, that contingent should move away from him, and perform the second cycle by themselves. They must formulate the intention to move away, because it is never permissible for the follower [*ma'mūm*] to move away from his prayer leader [*imām*] without a specifically formulated intention [*niyya*]. Then, having pronounced the salutation [at the conclusion of the second cycle of prayer], they must station themselves in the direction of the enemy.

The second contingent should then line up behind the prayer leader [*imām*], pronounce the consecratory affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness, and perform the [second] cycle of ritual prayer [*rak'a*] together with him. Then, while the prayer leader [*imām*] remains in the sitting posture [at the end of the second cycle], the second contingent must stand up and perform the first cycle [which they have missed].

Once they have adopted the sitting posture [after the two prostrations], and have pronounced the testimony [*tashahhud*], the prayer leader [*imām*] will lead them in the final salutation [*yusallimu bi-him*].

The prayer leader [*imām*] should prolong his Qur'ānic recitation in the second cycle, thereby allowing sufficient time for the first contingent to complete the second cycle [by themselves], before changing places with their comrades. The second contingent can then come and consecrate themselves to prayer in his company. He should also prolong the testimony [*tashahhud*] for the benefit of the second contingent, thereby giving them time to complete the cycle they have missed, until they catch up with him in the testimony, at which point he should lead them in the final salutation.

The second contingent will thus obtain the merit of pronouncing the salutation [*salām*] together with the prayer leader [*imām*], while the first contingent will obtain the merit of pronouncing the initial consecration [*tahrīm*] together with the prayer leader [*imām*].

This was how Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) led the Muslims in the performance of this ritual prayer [*ṣallā-hā bi'l-Muslimīn*] during the military campaign [*ghazwa*] of Dhāt ar-Riqā'.³⁶²

According to the traditional report [*ḥadīth*] of Sahl ibn Abī Khuzaima (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) explained:

The prayer leader [*imām*] should stand with one row behind him, and one row in front of the enemy. He should lead those behind him in one act of bowing [*rak'a*] and two acts of prostration [*sajdatain*], then stand up and maintain an upright posture, until they have performed a cycle of prayer [*rak'a*] by themselves. Then they should change places with the contingent at the front, and he should then lead the second contingent in turn in one act of bowing [*rak'a*] and two acts of prostration [*sajdatain*]. Then he should remain in the sitting posture, until they have completed another cycle [*rak'a*] to make up for the one they missed. Then he should lead them in pronouncing the final salutation.

According to a statement attributed to our Imām [Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), there is evidence to support the permissibility of postponing the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], in wartime situations of close combat and hot pursuit, until such conditions no longer prevail, and war has laid down its burdens.

In our treatment of it up to this point, we have described the ritual prayer in time of danger [*ṣalāt al-khawf*] as a two-cycle prayer, corresponding

³⁶² In the campaign of Dhāt ar-Riqā', the Muslim troops were four hundred strong.

to the prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] and to the four-cycle prayers³⁶³ that are shortened to two cycles during a journey.³⁶⁴

As for the [three-cycle] sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*], its performance in time of danger should be conducted as follows: The prayer leader [*imām*] should lead the first contingent in two cycles [*rak'atain*], and the second contingent in one cycle [*rak'a*]. There must be no subtraction from it, because it is not a prayer that can be curtailed.

When should the first contingent move away from the prayer leader [*imām*]? Should they do so when he adopts the sitting posture to pronounce the first testimony [*tashahhud*], or when he stands up in readiness to perform the third cycle? There are two conflicting opinions with regard to this question.

If danger threatens troops in their home base [where four-cycle prayers may not be curtailed], the prayer leader [*imām*] should lead each contingent in the performance of two cycles [of a four-cycle prayer],⁴⁷⁶ and they should then complete the other two cycles by themselves. If he divides them into four sections, his own prayer [*ṣalāt*] will not be valid, nor will the prayer [*ṣalāt*] of the third and fourth sections. As for whether the prayer [*ṣalāt*] of the first and second sections will also be rendered null and void, there are two conflicting opinions on the subject.

In the account we have given thus far, we have assumed that the enemy's position is either to the rear of the *Qibla*, or to the right and left of it. If the enemy is stationed directly in front of the *Qibla*, so that the opposing forces can see each other, and there is no reason to suspect a lurking ambush, it is still permissible for the prayer leader [*imām*] to conduct the ritual prayer of danger [*ṣalāt al-khawf*]. In this case, however, he should arrange the troops in two or three rows, depending on how many or how few they happen to be, and then lead them all together in the consecratory affirmation. Then he should lead them all together in the performance of the first cycle [*rak'a*]. When he reaches the act of prostration [*sujūd*], they should all prostrate themselves, with the exception of those in the first row, the row immediately behind him.

They must remain standing to keep watch over the others, until the latter stand up in readiness to perform the second cycle, at which point they should also prostrate themselves, and then rejoin the rest in the

³⁶³ Under normal conditions, the noon prayer [*ṣalāt az-zuhr*], the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*] and the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿishāʿ*] are all prayers of four cycles [*raka'āt*].

³⁶⁴ See pp. 264–67 below.

upright posture. When the prayer leader [*imām*] prostrates himself in the second cycle, the row to remain standing should be the first of the rows that performed the prostration with him in the first cycle. This row must now keep watch over the others, until the prayer leader [*imām*] adopts the sitting posture to pronounce the testimony [*tashahhud*], at which point they must join him in the testimony. They should follow him, therefore, so that he can lead all of them together in the final salutation.

According to traditional report, this is how the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) conducted the prayer, when danger threatened at ‘Uṣfān [a place near Mecca].

As a permissible alternative, in the second cycle, the first row can move to the rear, while the second row moves forward and takes its place, in order to stand guard in front.

If the danger is extremely intense, and the combat is being waged at very close quarters, the troops may pray in congregation, or as separate individuals, in whatever manner they find possible under the circumstances: walking or riding, facing the *Qibla* or with their backs to it, by making gestures or without making gestures. As to whether or not they are required to face the *Qibla* at the very beginning of the prayer [*ṣalāt*], there are two conflicting traditional reports.

Then, if safety is assured, and the enemy is routed, they should bring their prayer [*ṣalāt*] to completion. They should dismount from their riding beasts, turning to face the *Qibla* as they do so.

If they embark on the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] with a sense of security, but then grave danger suddenly threatens, they should mount up and complete the prayer of danger [*ṣalāt al-khawf*], even if they need to strike and thrust, as they charge to and fro in battle.

This form of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is permissible for anyone who is in danger of being attacked by any kind of enemy, including savage beasts, torrential floods, highway robbers, and other such menacing threats. According to one of two conflicting reports, it is likewise permissible if he is in pursuit of the enemy, and in danger of letting him escape, just when his defeat is imminent.



6. Concerning the shortened version of the ritual prayer [*qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt*].

As for the shortened version of the ritual prayer [*qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt*], it is permissible for the long-distance traveler to perform it, once he has passed beyond the houses of his own town or village, or beyond the tents of his nomadic tribe.

In the case of a four-cycle prayer [*rubāʿiyya*],³⁶⁵ the traveler may shorten it to two cycles [*rakʿatain*], provided that his journey is a long one. In this context, a long journey means one that covers a distance of sixteen leagues, i.e., four courier-stages, or forty-eight miles according to the Hāshimī measure, one courier-stage [*barīd*] being equal to four leagues [*farāsikh*, pl. of *farsakh*].

The traveler may shorten his prayer while he is on the road, whether he is outward bound or making the homeward journey.

If he enters a town or village along the way, and intends to perform twenty-two prescribed prayers during his stay there, he must perform them in full, since his status will then be the same as that of a local resident. If he intends to perform twenty-one prescribed prayers, there are two conflicting accounts of the doctrine regarding his status. If the number is less than that, he may unquestionably shorten his prayers.

If he breaks his journey in a town, without knowing when he is going to move on—if he has no specific intention, but says: “I may leave today, or I may leave tomorrow”—he may shorten his prayers. This is based on a traditional report, according to which the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once stopped in Mecca for eighteen days—some say fifteen days—and he shortened his prayers throughout his stay.

³⁶⁵ Under normal conditions, the noon prayer [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣuḥr*], the afternoon prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*] and the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿishāʾ*] are all prayers of four cycles [*rakʿāt*]. There is no shortened version of the dawn/daybreak prayer [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ/al-fajr*], which always consists of two cycles, nor of the sunset prayer [*ṣalāt al-maghrib*], which invariably consists of three cycles.

To quote the traditional report [*ḥadīth*] of ‘Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣain (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

“During the conquest [*fath*] of Mecca, at which I was present in the company of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the ritual prayers he performed were all of two cycles [*rak’atain*] only. But then he said to the inhabitants of the city: ‘Unlike us, you must perform four cycles of ritual prayer, for we are people on a journey [*qawm safar*].’”

On another occasion, when the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) spent twenty days at Tabūk, he likewise shortened his ritual prayers, as did his Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

It was Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) who said:

“The Companions of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) spent seven months in Rāmḥurmuz, and they shortened the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] throughout that period.”

According to another traditional report, Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once stayed for six months in Azerbaijān, and the ritual prayers he performed there were all of two cycles [*rak’atain*] only.

It may sometimes happen that a person is a local resident, at the moment when he enters the consecrated state of ritual prayer [*aḥrama bi-’ṣ-ṣalāt*], but then he becomes a traveler. Take the case of a passenger aboard a ship. When he starts to perform his ritual prayer, the ship is still moored within the limits of his own town, in a dock inside the walls of its port. But then the ship’s captain sets sail, and the vessel leaves the confines of the town. In a case like this, the worshipper is obliged to perform the ritual prayer in full.

A similar rule would apply, if a person entered the state of consecration [*aḥrama*] while still traveling, but then arrived in a town. If he was himself a resident of that town, or if he was following the lead [*i’ tamma*] of a local resident—or of someone who might be either a resident or a traveler, for all he knew—and he had not begun the prayer with the express intention of shortening it, he would be obliged to perform the prayer in full, in any such case.

When someone is performing the ritual prayer to make up for having missed it at the prescribed time [*qāḍiyan li’ ṣ-ṣalāt*], it is not permissible

for him to shorten it, because it rests on his conscience in the complete form. The fact that he is on a journey is irrelevant, except from the purely practical standpoint.

If someone enters the state of consecration [*ahrama*] with the intention [*niyya*] of shortening the ritual prayer, but then decides to regard himself as a resident, he must perform the prayer in full. By the same token, if he enters the state of consecration [*ahrama*] as a local resident, but then decides to set out on a journey, he must perform the prayer in full.

Furthermore, if a person's journey constitutes a sinful act of disobedience, or a trip undertaken for idle sport and entertainment, he is not entitled to take advantage of the traveler's dispensation. No one can legitimately avail himself of that dispensation, unless his journey is undertaken for some obligatory purpose, such as the Pilgrimage [*Hajj*] or the Sacred Struggle [*Jihād*], or for one that is permissible, such as trade, or the settlement of a debt, and any comparable endeavor.

If we allow the sinner to enjoy it on his travels, we shall actually be helping him to disobey his Lord, encouraging him to persist in his sinful disobedience, and giving him no incentive to reform himself through worshipful obedience to Him. Far from offering him positive support and assistance in the right direction, we shall be holding him back and discouraging him from taking a better course.

According to the doctrine of our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), it is more meritorious to shorten the ritual prayer than to perform it in full. The traveler may choose to perform either the complete or the shortened version of the prayer, just as he may choose to keep the fast or to break it. In all such cases, however, it is better to refrain from trying to impress Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) with a show of hardy endurance, and to accept His dispensation and His kindness instead.

If, in choosing to perform the complete version of the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] and keep the fast [*ṣiyām*], the traveler had no motive other than personal pride, vanity, conceit and self-aggrandizement—and if, in choosing to shorten the prayer and break the fast, he had no motive other than to make the lower self [*nafs*] humble, contrite, and submissively resigned to forsaking complete worship and strict observance—it could certainly be said, with total credibility: “It is better to shorten the prayer and break the fast.”

Indeed, how could it be otherwise, in view of the Prophet's response (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when someone remarked to him concerning the shortened version of the ritual prayer [*qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt*]: "Why should we continue to perform the shortened version, now that we are safe from danger [on this journey]?" To this he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

That is a charitable gift [*ṣadaqa*]. Allāh has graciously bestowed it on His servants, so accept His charitable gift!

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

Allāh loves to have His dispensations accepted, just as He loves to have His strict injunctions accepted.

What astounding arrogance, therefore, on the part of someone who performs the complete prayer on a journey, and keeps the fast, thereby refusing to accept the dispensation, even though he is guilty of such major sins [*kabā'ir*] as eating unlawful food, drinking intoxicating liquor, wearing silk, committing adultery [*zinā*]³⁶⁶ and sodomy [*liwāṭa*],³⁶⁷ holding false beliefs concerning fundamental principles [*uṣūl*], and other atrocious offenses.



³⁶⁶ In the vocabulary of Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*], the Arabic word *zinā* covers both adultery and fornication. For a precise technical definition, see J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 178.

³⁶⁷ The noun *liwāṭa* is derived from the trilateral root *l-w-ṭ*, which indicates that it refers to the homosexual vices of the people of Lot [*Lūṭ*], whose name is spelled *l-w-ṭ* in the Arabic script.

7.

Concerning the combination of two ritual prayers [*al-jam' baina 'ş-şalātain*].

As for the combination of two ritual prayers [*al-jam' baina 'ş-şalātain*], it is permissible for the traveler to combine the prayers of noon [*ẓuhr*] and afternoon [*'aṣr*], and those of sunset [*maghrib*] and late evening [*'ishā'*], with the proviso that the journey must be a long one. In this context, a long journey is one that covers a distance of sixteen leagues [*farsakh*], as we have already explained.³⁶⁸ This practice is not permissible on a short journey, i.e., one that covers less than the distance mentioned.

The traveler is free to choose either of two options, namely:

1. He may postpone the first [of the two prayers concerned] until the earliest time prescribed for the second.
2. He may bring the second prayer forward to the time prescribed for the first.

The recommended choice is postponement, meaning that he should delay his performance of the first prayer, and perform the second early [in its prescribed period]. In other words, he should perform them both at the beginning of the period of time prescribed for the second.

If he chooses to perform both prayers in the period of time prescribed for the first, he must begin with the first, and then perform the second immediately after it.

He must formulate the intention to combine [the two prayers] at the point of consecration [*ihrām*] for the first. He should not leave any interval between the two, except to allow for the *iqāma*,³⁶⁹ and for the ritual ablution [*wuḍū'*], if his ablution needs to be renewed.

³⁶⁸ In connection with the shortened version of the ritual prayer [*qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt*], on p. 264 above.

³⁶⁹ The *iqāma*, the announcement that the ritual prayer is about to begin, is an abbreviated version of the *adhān* [call to prayer], with the addition of the words (repeated twice): *qad qāmati' ṣ-ṣalāh* [The prayer is about to begin!]

If he performs a customary ritual [*sunnat aṣ-ṣalāt*] between the two [obligatory prayers], the combination [*jamʿ*] is rendered null and void, according to one of the two accounts of the relevant doctrine. According to the other, it is not rendered null and void. In any event, the best course is for him to postpone the customary practice [*sunna*], until after he has duly completed the obligatory observance [*farḍ*], and to refrain from anything else that would separate the combined prayers.

If he performs the combination during the time prescribed for the second prayer, having formulated his intention [*niyya*] during the time prescribed for the first, that intention will be sufficient. He does not need to renew the intention, at the time when he actually performs the two prayers, because his only reason for postponing the first was to combine it with the second. It makes no difference, whether he formulates the relevant intention at the beginning of the time prescribed for the first prayer, or whether he does so with only a fraction of that time remaining. But if the time prescribed for the first prayer expires completely, before the intention to combine [*niyyat al-jamʿ*] has been formulated, it is not permissible to perform the two prayers in combination.

If he chooses to perform the combination during the time prescribed for the second prayer, he must begin with the first, and then perform the second immediately after it, as if he were performing them in the time prescribed for the first.

Is it strictly stipulated that he must not separate the two [obligatory] prayers, by interposing a customary practice [*sunna*], or any other [supererogatory observance]? There are two conflicting opinions regarding this matter.

Among our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, there is one who maintains that combining [*jamʿ*] and shortening [*qaṣr*] do not require a specific intention [*niyya*]. The scholar in question is Abū Bakr³⁷⁰ (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

As for the combining of prayers [*jamʿ*] on account of rain, this is permissible when the prayers concerned are those of sunset [*maghrib*]

³⁷⁰ Abū Bakr al-Khallāl (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) was responsible for compiling and systematizing the legal teachings of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him). He died in A.H. 311/923-4 C.E.

and late evening [*‘ishā’*]. Is it also permissible to combine the prayers of noon [*ẓuhr*] and afternoon [*‘aṣr*]? On this point there are two conflicting opinions.

What if people are sheltering indoors, on account of bad weather? Is that sufficient reason to permit the combining of prayers [*jam‘*], even if no rain is actually falling, and no bitterly cold wind is actually blowing? Here again, there are two conflicting opinions. We must therefore examine the particular situation in detail, if someone does in fact combine two prayers under such conditions. If he does so during the time prescribed for the first prayer, because rain is then falling, he is justified in assuming that rain will be present at the beginning of the first prayer, at the conclusion thereof, and at the beginning of the second. If he performs the combination during the time prescribed for the second prayer, it will likewise be permissible, regardless of whether the rain is still falling, or whether it has stopped by then, because he had a valid excuse for postponing the first prayer. The fact that the excuse has disappeared is irrelevant, because the first period has now elapsed and expired, so there is no possibility of restoring and recapturing it.

If we advise such a person that the combining of prayers [*jam‘*] is permissible, we do so in recognition of the hardship that people suffer in wet weather. Since their clothes, their shoes and their pouches get soaked and damp, it is extremely inconvenient for them to move in and out of doors [between their homes and the mosques]. The Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

When the hard and rugged tracts of ground are wet and slippery, the ritual prayer should be performed in the shelter of people’s homes [*idha ‘btallati ‘n-ni‘āl—fa-‘ṣ-ṣalātu fi ‘r-riḥāl*].³⁷¹

This saying is reported in the *Ṣaḥīḥain* [the two most famous collections of authentic traditions].

According to our [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, the status of the sick person is the same as that of the traveler, as far as the combining of ritual prayers [*jam‘*] is concerned, because Allāh (Exalted is He) has linked them

³⁷¹ In the context of this saying of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), the word *ni‘āl*—which usually means ‘shoes; sandals’—is interpreted by traditional authorities as synonymous with *ḥirār* [hard and rugged tracts of ground]. (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. R-Ḥ-L.)

together. He has mentioned them both in a single sentence, for He has said (Almighty and Glorious is He):

And whoever of you is sick,	<i>fa-man kāna min-kum marīḍan</i>
or on a journey, [let him fast the same]	<i>aw 'alā safarin</i>
number of other days. (2:184)	<i>fa-'iddatun min ayyāmin ukhar.</i>

The reason for the alleviation is the incidence of disability and hardship, and this is more unequivocally and obviously applicable to the person who is sick, because the traveler may be a comfortable and pampered passenger, pleasantly relaxed, perfectly fit and sprightly. While he is on a journey, the traveler may enjoy even greater ease and luxury than at home, through the influence of his wealth, authority and power, yet he is nonetheless entitled to avail himself of the relevant dispensations [*rukhaṣ*]. The sick person is at the opposite extreme, so he is even more entitled to the dispensations than is the traveler.



8. The ritual prayer at the funeral service [*aṣ-ṣalāt ‘ala ’l-jināza*].

As for the ritual prayer at the funeral service [*aṣ-ṣalāt ‘ala ’l-jināza*],³⁷² it is a collective duty [*farḍ ‘ala ’l-kifāya*].³⁷³ According to our [Ḥanbalī] doctrine, the person best qualified to lead this prayer is the executor [*waṣī*] of the deceased, followed by the head of state [*sultān*], then by the male relatives of the deceased, in order of closeness.

The prayer leader [*imām*] should stand opposite the chest of a male corpse, and opposite the waist of a female.

If there are several corpses, they should be arranged so that their heads are in line with one another.³⁷⁴ If they are of various classes, they should be arranged in order of priority, with the most distinguished lying closest to the prayer leader [*imām*]. Suppose, for instance, that the corpses are those of men, women, slaves, hermaphrodites [*khanāthā*], and boys. The men should take precedence, then the slaves, then the boys, then the hermaphrodites, and then the women.³⁷⁵ Each class should then be inspected in detail, and rearranged if necessary, so that, within each class, those lying closest to the prayer leader [*imām*] are the most distinguished in terms of learning [*‘ilm*], knowledge of the Qur’ān, religious devotion [*dīn*] and piety [*wara’*].

When the prayer leader [*imām*] stands in his place at the head of the congregation, he must turn and look to right and left, making sure that the rows are straight, as he does in all other ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*]. He must beg forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He), repent his sins, and remember his own mortality, as well as the abode of the Hereafter. He

³⁷² The form *janāza* is also used, as an acceptable alternative to *jināza*.

³⁷³ See note 324 on p. 243 above.

³⁷⁴ **Author’s note:** If a male corpse and a female corpse are lying next to each other, some authorities maintain that the waist of the woman should be placed opposite the chest of the man.

³⁷⁵ **Author’s note:** According to one account of his doctrine, he [Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal] maintained that boys should take precedence over slaves.

must be thoroughly convinced that death is a cup from which he is bound to drink, and that it will inevitably be passed to him. He must therefore ensure that his inner feeling is fully conscious, and that his limbs and organs are in a state of humble submissiveness, so that he can respond to his summons with alacrity. Only then should he perform the ritual prayer for the deceased [*yuṣalli ‘ala ’l-mayyit*], in the manner now to be described:

He will begin by saying:

I am performing the ritual prayer	<i>uṣallī</i>
for this person deceased,	<i>‘alā hādha ’l-mayyiti</i>
in fulfillment of a collective duty.	<i>farḍan ‘ala ’l-kifāya.</i>

(There is no need for him to specify whether the person concerned is male or female.)

He will then pronounce four affirmations of the Supreme Greatness of Allāh [*yukabbiru arba‘a takbīrāt*].³⁷⁶ Immediately after pronouncing the first of these, he should recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*], because Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) instructed us to recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] at the funeral service [*‘ala ’l-jināza*].”

After the second affirmation of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*takbīra*], he should invoke His blessings on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), just as he invokes them in the testimony [*tashahhud*],³⁷⁷ because Mujāhid (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

“I asked eighteen men, from among the Companions of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace), about how to conduct the ritual prayer at the funeral service [*aṣ-ṣalāt ‘ala ’l-jināza*], and all of them told me:

“Pronounce the affirmation of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness [*kabbir*]. Then recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*]. Then pronounce the [second] affirmation of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness

³⁷⁶ The affirmation of Allāh’s Supreme Greatness is expressed by declaring: “*Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is Supremely Great!]” The general term for this affirmation is *takbīr*. A specific utterance thereof is called a *takbīra*, and the form *takbīrāt* is the plural of *takbīra*.

³⁷⁷ See pp. 84 and 85 above.

[*kabbir*]. Then invoke Allāh's blessings on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). Then pronounce the [third] affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*kabbir*].

“Immediately after the third affirmation, you should offer prayers of supplication for the deceased, and also for yourself, for your parents, and for the Muslims in general. Various kinds of supplication [*du‘ā'*] are permissible, so you may choose whichever you know best, and whichever you find easiest.”

The recommended practice, however, is for the prayer leader [*imām*] to say:

O Allāh, forgive
our living and our dead,
and those of us who are present
and those of us who are absent,
and our young and our old,
and those of us who are male
and those of us who are female.

O Allāh,
those of us whom You keep alive,
let them live in accordance
with Islām and the Sunna,
and those of us whom
You cause to die,
let them die in
accordance with the same.

You surely know
our destination
and our final resting place,
and You are Powerful over all things.

O Allāh, he is Your servant,
and the son of Your servant.
He has now lodged with You,
and You are the Best to lodge with,
and we know nothing but good
[about him].

O Allāh, if he has been beneficent,
reward him for his beneficence,
and if he has been maleficent,
grant him an amnesty.

O Allāh, we have come to You
as intercessors on his behalf,
so accept our intercession

*Allāhumma 'ghfir li-ḥayyi-nā
li-ḥayyi-nā wa mayyiti-nā
wa shāhidi-nā
wa ghā'ibi-nā
wa ṣaghīri-nā wa kabīri-nā
wa dhakari-nā
wa unthā-nā.*

*Allāhumma
man aḥyāta-hu
min-nā fa-aḥyi-hi
'ala 'l-Islāmi wa 's-Sunna:
wa man
tawaffāta-hu
min-nā fa-tawaffa-hu
'alai-himā.*

*inna-ka ta'lamu
munqalaba-nā
wa mathwā-nā
wa Anta 'alā kulli shai' in Qadr.*

*Allāhumma inna-hu 'abdu-ka
wa 'bnu 'abdi-ka
nazala bi-ka
wa Anta khairu manzūlin bi-hi
wa lā na'lamu illā khairā.*

*Allāhumma in kāna muḥsinan
fa-jāzi-hi bi-iḥsāni-hi
wa in kāna musī'an
fa-tajāwaz 'an-h.*

*Allāhumma innā ji'nā-ka
shufa'a la-hu
fa-shaffi'-nā*

for his sake.
Protect him from the
torture of the grave,
and from the torment of the Fire
[of Hell].

Pardon him,
and honor his resting place.
Grant him a home
that is better than his [earthly] home,
and an environment that is better
than his [earthly] environment.
And do the same for us
and for all the Muslims.

O Allāh, do not deprive us
of his recompense,
and do not desert us after him.

*fī-hi
wa qī-hi min
fitnati 'l-qabri
wa 'adhābi 'n-nāri*

*wa 'fu 'an-hu
wa akrim mathwā-hu
wa abdil-hu dāran
khairan min dāri-hi
wa jiwāran
khairan min jiwāri-hi
wa 'f al dhālika bi-nā
wa bi-jamū'ī 'l-muslimīn.*

*Allāhumma lā taḥrim-nā
ajra-hu
wa lā tafut-nā ba'da-h.*

Immediately after the fourth affirmation of Allāh's Supreme Greatness [*takbīra*], the prayer leader [*imām*] should say:

O Allāh, our Lord, give us
in this world that which is good,
and in the Hereafter
that which is good,
and guard us against
the torment of the Fire
[of Hell]. (2:201)³⁷⁸

*Allāhumma Rabba-nā āti-nā
fi 'd-dunyā ḥasanatan
wa fi 'l-ākhirati
ḥasanatan
wa qī-nā
'adhāba 'n-nār.*

(Among our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, however, there are some who maintain that the prayer leader [*imām*] should stand still for a little while [after the fourth affirmation], without saying anything at all [before the salutation].)

He should then pronounce a single salutation [*taslīma*],³⁷⁹ while turning his face to his right. If he pronounces two salutations [one to the right and then one to the left], this is also permissible. The twofold salutation is preferred by the school [*madhhab*] of Imām ash-Shāfi'ī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), while the single salutation [*taslīma*] represents the preference of our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

³⁷⁸ The word *Allāhumma* [O Allāh] is not part of the Qur'ānic quotation.

³⁷⁹ In other words, the prayer leader [*imām*] should say:

Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allāh. *as-salāmu 'alāikum wa raḥmatu'llāh.*

According to traditional reports, at least six of the Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] are known to have pronounced only one salutation [*taslīma*] at the funeral service, namely: ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, ‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Abbās, Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn Abī Awfā, Abū Huraira, and Wāthila ibn al-Asqā‘ (may Allāh be well pleased with them all).

There is also a traditional report concerning the Prophet himself (Allāh bless him and give him peace), in which it is stated: “He performed the ritual prayer at a funeral service [*ṣallā ‘alā jināza*], so he pronounced the salutation to his right.”

If the prayer leader [*imām*] wishes to offer a different supplication [*du‘ā’*], instead of the one suggested above, he may do so. He may also say:

Praise be to Allāh,
who has caused some to die
and some to live,
and praise be to Allāh,
who restores the dead to life.
To Him belongs the Majesty
and the Grandeur and the Kingdom
and the Power and the Glory,
and He is Powerful over all things.

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
and the family of Muḥammad,
as You have bestowed Your blessings
and Your mercy and Your grace
upon Abraham
and the family of Abraham.
Surely You deserve
to be praised and extolled!

O Allāh, he is Your servant,
and the son of Your servant,
and the son of Your maidservant.
You created him and nourished him.
You caused him to die,
and You will restore him to life.
You know his innermost secret.

We have come to You
as intercessors on his behalf,
so accept our intercession for his sake.

O Allāh, we invoke the bond
of Your compact to afford him refuge.
You are indeed Reliable
and Faithful to Your covenant.

*al-ḥamdu li’llāhi
’lladhī amāta
wa ahyā
wa ’l-ḥamdu li’llāhi ’lladhī
yuhyi ’l-mawtā
la-hu ’l-‘aẓamatu
wa ’l-kibriyā’u wa ’l-mulku
wa ’l-qudratu wa ’th-thanā’u
wa Huwa ‘alā kulli shai’in Qadr.*

*Allāhumma ṣalli ‘alā Muḥammadin
wa ‘alā āli Muḥammadin
ka-mā ṣallaita wa raḥimta
wa bārakta
‘alā Ibrāhīma
wa ‘alā āli Ibrāhīma
inna-ka
Ḥamidum Majīd.*

*Allāhumma inna-hu ‘abdu-ka
wa ’bnu ‘abdi-ka
wa ’bnu amati-ka
Anta khalaqta-hu wa razaqta-hu
wa Anta amatta-hu
wa Anta tuḥyi-hi
Anta ta’lamu bi-sirri-h.*

*ji’ nā-ka
shufa’ā’ a la-hu
fa-shaffi’-nā fi-h.*

*Allāhumma innā nastajīru
bi-ḥabli juwāri-ka la-hu
inna-ka Dhū wafā’in
wa dhimma.*

O Allāh, protect him
from the torture of the grave,
and from the torment of Hell.

O Allāh, forgive him,
and have mercy on him,
and excuse him, and pardon him.
Honor his resting place,
and make its entrance wide.
Wash him with the water
of snow and ice,
and cleanse him of sinful mistakes,
as white cloth is cleansed
of the stain of dirt.

Grant him a home to live in,
that is better than his [earthly] home,
with a spouse who is better
than his [earthly] spouse,
and a family that is better
than his [earthly] family.
Cause him to enter the Garden
and save him from the Fire.

O Allāh, if he has been beneficent,
add to his beneficence,
and reward him for his beneficence;
and if he has been maleficent,
grant him an amnesty.

O Allāh,
he has now lodged with You,
and You are the Best to lodge with.
He is poor, in need of Your mercy,
whereas You are Rich,
in no need of his punishment.

O Allāh, confirm his speech
at his interrogation.
and do not try him in his grave
with more than he
is capable of bearing.

O Allāh, do not deprive us
of his recompense,
and do not desert us after him.

Allāhumma qi-hi
min fitnati 'l-qabri
wa min 'adhābi Jahannam.

Allāhumma 'ghfir la-hu
wa 'rham-hu
wa 'āfi-hi wa 'fu 'an-hu
wa akrim mathwā-hu
wa wassi' madkhla-hu
wa 'ghsil-hu
bi-mā' 'i 'th-thalji wa 'l-baradi
wa naqqi-hi mina 'l-khatāyā
ka-mā yunaqqa 'th-thawbu 'l-abyaḍu
mina 'd-danas.

wa anzil-hu dāran
khairan min dāri-hi
wa zawjan khairan
min zawji-hi
wa ahlan khairan
min ahl-hi
wa adkhill-hu 'l-jannata
wa najji-hi mina 'n-nār.

Allāhumma in kāna muḥsinan
fa-zid fi iḥsāni-hi
fa-jāzi-hi bi-iḥsāni-hi
wa in kāna musī'an
fa-tajāwaz 'an-h.

Allāhumma
inna-hu qad nazala bi-ka
wa Anta khairu manzūlin bi-hi
wa huwa faqīrun ilā raḥmati-ka
wa Anta Ghaniyyun
'an 'adhābi-h.

Allāhumma thabbit
'inda mas'alati-hi mantiqa-hu
wa lā tabtali-hi fi qabri-hi
bi-mā lā
tāqata la-hu bi-h.

Allāhumma lā taḥrim-nā
ajra-hu
wa lā tafut-nā ba'da-h.

If the deceased person is a woman, the prayer leader [*imām*] should say
[at the appropriate point]:

O Allāh, she is Your maidservant,
and the daughter of Your servant
and Your maidservant.

Allāhumma inna-hā amatu-ka
wa 'bnatu 'abdi-ka
wa amati-ka.

He should then complete the supplication [*du‘ā’*], [using the feminine form of the pronoun, etc., wherever necessary].

The person best entitled to conduct the funeral service—according to the doctrine of our Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him)—is the person appointed to the task by the deceased, in his last will and testament. Second in line is the ruler or governor [*wāṭī*]. After that, the order of precedence is as follows:

1. The closest male relative in the direct line of ascent, viz., the father, the father’s father, and so on, by however many generations.
2. The closest male relative in the direct line of descent, viz., the son, the son’s son, and so on, by however many generations.
3. The closest male collateral, viz., the brother, the brother’s son, the paternal uncle, the son of the paternal uncle.

Should the husband take precedence over the son? On this point there are two conflicting opinions.

The Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them all) usually bequeathed the task of conducting their funeral prayer [*aṣ-ṣalāt ‘alai-him*] to a person named in their last will and testament. For instance, as we know from traditional reports:

Abū Bakr (may Allāh be well pleased with him) bequeathed the task of conducting his funeral prayer [*waṣṣā an yuṣaliyya ‘alai-hi*] to ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him).

‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him) bequeathed the task of conducting his funeral prayer to Ṣuḥaib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), even though his own son, ‘Abdu’llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him), was alive and available.

Shuraiḥ bequeathed the task of conducting his funeral prayer to Zaid ibn al-Arḡam.

Maisara bequeathed the task of conducting his funeral prayer to Shuraiḥ.

[The Prophet’s wife] ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) appointed Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) as her executor.

[The Prophet’s wife] Umm Salama (may Allāh be well pleased with her) bequeathed the task of conducting her funeral prayer [*waṣṣat an yuṣaliyya ‘alai-hā*] to Sa‘īd ibn Jubair.

When the supplication [*du‘ā’*] is offered on behalf of an infant, the prayer leader [*imām*] should say:

O Allāh, he is Your servant,
and the son of Your servant,
and the son of Your maidservant.
You created him and nourished him.
You caused him to die,
and You will restore him to life.

O Allāh, let him be for his parents
a predecessor and a treasure,
a precursor and a recompense.
Let him weigh heavy in their scales,
and enhance their rewards
on his account.

Deprive neither us
nor the two of them
of his recompense,
and desert neither us
nor them, after him.

O Allāh, join him together with
the righteous believers of the past,
in the custody of Abraham.
Grant him a home
that is better than his [earthly] home,
and a family that is better
than his [earthly] family,
and save him from
the torment of Hell.

O Allāh, forgive
our children who die before us,
and our ancestors,
and those who have
preceded us in faith.

O Allāh,
those of us whom You keep alive,
let them live
in accordance with Islām,
and those of us
whom You cause to die,
let them die in faith.

Forgive the believing men
and the believing women:
those of them who are still alive,
as well as those who are dead.

Allāhumma inna-hu 'abdu-ka
wa 'bnu 'abdi-ka
wa 'bnu amati-ka
Anta khalaqta-hu wa razaqta-hu
wa Anta amatta-hu
wa Anta tuhyi-h.

Allāhumma 'j' al-hu li-wālidai-hi
salafan wa dhukhran
wa farāṭan wa ajran
wa thaqqil bi-hi mawāzīna-humā
wa 'azzim bi-hi
ujūra-humā.

wa lā tahrim-nā
wa iyyā-humā
ajra-hu
wa lā tafut-nā
wa iyyā-humā ba'da-h.

Allāhumma alhiq-hu
bi-ṣālihi salafi 'l-mu' minīna
fi kafālati Ibrāhīma
wa abdil-hu dāran
khairan min dāri-hi
wa ahlān khairan
min ahl-hi
wa 'āfi-hi min
'adhābi Jahannam.

Allāhumma 'ghfir
li-afrāṭi-nā
wa aslāfi-nā
wa man sabaqa-nā
bi-'l-īmān.

Allāhumma
man aḥyāta-hu min-nā
fa-aḥyi-hi
'ala 'l-Islām:
wa man
tawaffāta-hu min-nā
fa-tawaffa-hu 'ala 'l-īmān.

wa 'ghfir li-'l-mu' minīna
wa 'l-mu' mināti 'l-aḥyā'i
min-hum
wa 'l-amwāt.

In the case of a miscarried fetus [*siqt*], the funeral prayer and ritual washing may also be required, but only if it has developed to the point

where the shape of a human being is already apparent. If it is merely a piece of flesh, in which no embryonic form can be discerned, it should simply be buried, with neither ritual washing nor funeral prayer. When ritual washing is legally required [*yushra' u fi-hi 'l-ghusl*], in a case of this sort, it does not matter whether the washing is performed by a man or by a woman, because it is traditionally reported that Ibrāhīm, the son of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), died at the age of eighteen months, and the women washed his corpse.



Concerning the proper treatment of someone whose moment of death has arrived, and the procedures to be followed in the ritual washing [*ghusl*], enshrouding [*takfīn*], embalming [*taḥnīt*] and burial [*dafn*] of his corpse.

a.

Concerning the preparations a true believer [*mu'min*] should make, in order to be ready for his own inevitable death.

For every intelligent believer [*mu'min*], convinced of the certainty of death, it is commendable to remember death frequently, and to prepare for it. He should maintain a state of readiness and vigilant anticipation, through the hourly renewal of repentance, through self-examination, through disengagement from wrongs and debts, and by writing a definitive testamentary disposition. He should not be heedless of this sure and certain fact, general and universal in its significance for all humanity, for there is no escape from its arrival, its onslaught and its advent, and it is a cup from which all are bound to drink.

When we say that it is commendable for him to practice this advice, we do so for the simple reason that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

Remember often the wrecker of delights [*hāzīm al-ladhdhāt*].³⁸⁰

—and, in another wording:

Remember death often, for if you remember it in affluence, it will shake your confidence in wealth, and if you remember it in straitened circumstances, it will make your hardship easier to bear.

³⁸⁰ As the German scholar Bauer has pointed out, “the wrecker of delights [*hāzīm / hādīm / hādīm al-ladhdhāt*].” became the standard epithet of Death in the stories of *A Thousand and One Nights* [*Alf laila wa laila*].

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

Do you know which is the cleverest of all people, and which is the most prudent?
The cleverest of them is the one who most frequently remembers death, and the most prudent of them is the one who prepares for it most frequently.

“O Messenger of Allāh,” his listeners asked, “what symptom is indicative of that?” So he replied:

Utter indifference to the abode of delusion [*dār al-ghurūr*], and keen interest in the abode of eternity [*dār al-khulūd*].

Luqmān³⁸¹ (peace be upon him) said to his son:

“O my dear son, do not put off repentance till tomorrow, for death may come and take you by surprise.”

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

By what right does a man of property spend two whole nights, without having his will and testament written in his presence?

—and:

Call yourselves to account before you are called to account, and weigh your own selves before they are weighed.

‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) once said: “I heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

“For the sake of your worldly interests, work as if you are going to live forever, and for your interest in the Hereafter, work as if you are going to die tomorrow.”

The intelligent believer [*mu’min*] must therefore strive to acquit himself, before death comes, of all his outstanding obligations, whether they be sins and wrongs committed, or debts incurred. If he fails to do so, he must recognize and acknowledge the fact that he will be taken in pledge for those obligations. He must realize that, before very long, he will be chastised and punished in his grave. All his energies will then be cut off, and his faculties and senses will be out of action. His relatives and his neighbors will dissociate themselves from him, and his enemies and friends—men, women and children alike—will conspire to gain control of his property.

³⁸¹ Luqmān is commonly known as Luqmān the Wise [*Luqmān al-Hakīm*], because Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us in the Qur’ān:

And We did indeed give Luqmān wisdom. *wa la-qad ātainā Luqmāna ’l-hikmata*
(31:12)

To save himself from the consequences of leaving obligations unfulfilled, he must therefore do whatever he can to discharge them while he is still in this world, by making payment [*adhā'*], appealing for absolution [*istiḥlāl*],³⁸² expressing repentance [*tawba*], and demonstrating his willingness to make concessions [*idh'ān*]. Nothing else can save him from those consequences, apart from the covering provided by the All-Compassionate [*ar-Raḥīm*], through His Kindness [*Ra'fa*] and His Mercy [*Raḥma*]. Since He is the Most Merciful of the merciful [*Arḥam ar-Rāḥimīn*], He may compensate the claimants with whatever He wills in the Abode of Eternity and the Gardens of Paradise.

Samura ibn Jundab (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

“We were in the company of Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) when he conducted the ritual prayer at a funeral service [*ṣallā 'alā jināza*]. When he was leaving, he said: ‘Is there anyone here who belongs to the family of So-and-so?’ A man said: ‘I do,’ so he (blessing and peace be upon him) said to him: ‘So-and-so is held as a prisoner because of his debt.’

“As I then observed, his family, and others who were mourning over him, got up and took to settling debts on his behalf, until there was no one left who had any claim against him.”

In another version of this traditional report, the wording is: “So-and-so is held in confinement at the gate of the Garden of Paradise, because of an unpaid debt of his.”

³⁸² In Vol. 2, p. 159, Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained:

It is strictly necessary for the penitent to acquaint his victim with the full extent of each offense he has committed against him, and he must not give him an ambiguous description of any of the wrongs to which he is confessing. A vaguely worded plea for absolution [*istiḥlāl*] is not sufficient in such cases, because it is always possible that the injured party [*mazlūm*], if he came to know all the facts concerning the extent of his injury, would not feel disposed to waive his right to exact retribution. He might prefer to postpone that retribution to the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], in order to receive his compensation by having good deeds transferred to his account from that of his malefactor, or by having some of his own bad deeds transferred to the debit scale of the latter.

This rule does not apply, however, if the victim would suffer further injury from the knowledge of every specific item in the whole catalog of offenses against him. For instance, the offender would only add to the harm he had already caused, if he told his victim that he was guilty of sexual misconduct [*zinā*] with his maidservant or his wife, or that he had spread rumors about some hidden defect in his character. In cases like this, the penitent has no alternative but to couch his plea for absolution in rather vague terms. Even if he succeeds in obtaining the pardon he seeks, he will still be in debt to his victim because of a certain element of unrequited wrong, so he must repair that wrong by performing good deeds, just as he would have to repair the wrong if his victim happened to be dead or otherwise absent beyond his reach.

‘Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib] (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said:

“A man died—he was one of the People of the Bench [*Ahl aṣ-Ṣuffa*]³⁸³—and someone said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, he has left a dīnār [gold coin] and a dirham [silver coin] behind.’ So the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) replied: ‘Two purses of fire! Perform the funeral prayer for your companion, for there may be a debt outstanding against him.’”

According to another traditional report [*ḥadīth*]:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was present at the funeral service [*jīnāza*] of a man who was one of the Helpers [*Anṣār*],³⁸⁴ so he said: ‘Has he left any unpaid debt?’ ‘Yes,’ someone said, so he turned to leave, but ‘Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said: ‘I accept responsibility for what he owes.’ The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) thereupon came back and performed the funeral prayer for him [*ṣallā ‘alai-hi*], then said: ‘O ‘Alī, may Allāh redeem your pledge, as you have ransomed your Muslim brother! Whenever a man redeems another man of his debt, Allāh will redeem him on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*].’”

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

All rightful claims will surely be awarded to their claimants on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], so that even the hornless sheep will receive compensation from the sheep with horns.

He also said (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

Beware of injustice [*ẓulm*], for it will result in murky shades of darkness [*ẓulumāt*] on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*]. Beware of obscenity [*fuḥsh*], for Allāh does not like obscenity. And beware of greed [*shuḥḥ*], for greed was the downfall of your kinsfolk who preceded you. It incited them to sever the bonds of kinship, so they severed those bonds, then it incited them to perpetrate injustice [*ẓulm*], so they took to acting unjustly.



³⁸³ A special group of materially impoverished Muslims were known as the People of the Bench [*Ahl aṣ-Ṣuffa*], or the Companions of the Bench [*Aṣḥāb aṣ-Ṣuffa*], because they used to shelter on a bench in the porch outside the mosque of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) in Medina.

³⁸⁴ See note 267 on p. 200 above.

b.
Concerning the treatment of a fellow believer
[*mu`min*] who is sick, and who seems
unlikely to recover.

If a fellow believer [*mu`min*] has fallen sick, it is commendable to pay him a visit.

When his Muslim brother visits the sick person, he should examine his condition carefully, and if he finds evidence to suggest that he is likely to recover from his illness, the visitor should offer a prayer of supplication on his behalf [*da`ā la-hu*], then take his leave.

If, on the other hand, the visitor has reason to fear that the sick person's death may be imminent, he should encourage him to repent his sins, and to make a testamentary disposition [*waṣiyya*], bequeathing one third of his property to the poor among those of his relatives who will not inherit from him automatically.³⁸⁵ If all those relatives are rich, the bequest should be made in favor of the poor and the needy [in the community at large], and the people of learning [*ilm*] and virtue [*fadl*] and religion [*dīn*]. It should be made in favor of those whom destiny [*qadar*] has deprived of material means [*asbāb*], and whom pious restraint [*wara`*] has inhibited from taking an active interest in their acquisition.

From the viewpoint of such pious paupers, the material means [*asbāb*] have turned into lords [*arbāb*], so they have abandoned them, insistently declaring that the Lord [*ar-Rabb*] (Glory be to Him) can have no partner [*sharīk*], and resorting directly to Him for sustenance. Their property has thus become reliance on the Lord of Truth (Almighty and Glorious is He), and renunciation of what is in the hands of people. Their affirmation of Oneness [*tawhīd*] is thus preserved intact, and they yearn for Him with all parts of their being, purely and spontaneously,

³⁸⁵ In accordance with the Islāmic law of inheritance, the estate of a deceased Muslim is distributed automatically to the prescribed heirs. The power of testamentary disposition [*waṣiyya*] is restricted to a maximum of one third of a Muslim's property. (For details of the Islāmic rules of inheritance, see *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, arts. FARĀ'ID, MĪRĀTH and WAṢĪYA.)

without penalty in this world or punishment in the Hereafter. So congratulations to anyone who grants them a gift, or makes them a present, or treats them with gracious favor, or spends a day in their service, or devotes an hour to saying “*āmīn*” to their prayer of supplication [*ammaṅa ʿalā duʿāʾ i-him*], or seizes an opportunity to speak well of them. Congratulations to him, and congratulations to him yet again!

He deserves to be congratulated because they are the people of Allāh, because they are His favored élite [*khāṣṣa*]. Who can gain access to the presence of the king, without the assistance of his favored élite? How can one receive recompense from the ruler [*sulṭān*], except by way of his attendants and his servants? If someone establishes friendly relations with the attendants and servants, treats them well and serves their interests, they will soon introduce him to the King Almighty [*al-Malik al-Aʿzam*], at which point every one of them will mention his good qualities and refer to his noble deeds. The King will then bestow gracious favors upon him, in recompense for the beneficial services and meritorious acts he has performed.

So, if the symptom of death is clearly apparent, it is recommended that a member of the sick person’s family should remain constantly by his side. The relative who undertakes this task should be the one who is most kindly disposed toward him, the one who is most familiar with his traits of character and the factors that govern his behavior, and the one who is most conscious of his duty to his Lord, so that he can make him aware of Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He), and encourage him to obey Him by attending to the matters we have discussed above. He should take care to maintain the moisture of the dying person’s throat, by keeping it supplied with drops of water or some other suitable liquid, and he should use a piece of damp cotton to wet his lips. He should also prompt him to say, one time at least: “There is no god but Allāh [*lā ilāha illa ʿllāh*].” He should not urge him to say it more than three times, however, in case the effort makes him irritated and disturbed, with the result that his spirit departs while he is feeling an aversion to that. If he prompts him to say these words, but then the dying person utters something else, he should repeat his prompting, to ensure that his final utterance will be: “There is no god but Allāh [*lā ilāha illa ʿllāh*].” For, as the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

If someone’s last words are: “There is no god but Allāh [*lā ilāha illa ʿllāh*],” that person will enter the Garden of Paradise.

The attendant relative should do his prompting in a gentle and coaxing manner. It is also appropriate for him to recite in his presence the Sūra entitled *Yā Sīn*, so that it can be an aid to the departure of his spirit, and so that it can make the experience easier for him to bear.³⁸⁶

As soon as his spirit has departed, his attendant should arrange the body of the deceased so that he is stretched out on his back, with his face toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Ka'ba in Mecca], in other words, in such a manner that his face will be toward it when he is caused to sit up. Then he should waste no time in closing the eyes of the deceased, because, as we know from the traditional report of Shaddād ibn Aws (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

When you approach your dead, you must be sure to close their eyes, for the eyesight follows the spirit. And say something good, for he will say “*āmīn*” to what is said by the members of the family, then he will clamp his jawbones tight.

As for the manner in which the eyes of the dead should be closed, we have a description of it in the following traditional report: When [the Caliph] ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him) realized that he was at the point of death, he said to his son ‘Abdu’llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him): “Stand close beside me. Then, when you see that my spirit has reached my uvula, place the palm of your right hand upon my forehead, [draw it down] beneath my chin, and close my eyes.”

Next, the attendant should loosen the joints of the deceased, by moving his forearms back until they come in contact with his upper arms, then putting them straight again. He should bend his legs to meet his thighs, and move his thighs up to his stomach, then return them to their normal positions.

He should remove the clothes of the deceased, and shroud him in a garment that covers his entire body, because the whole of him becomes a private part [*‘awra*] by reason of death. This is why it is necessary to conceal the whole of his body in the shroud.

A heavy object, such as a mirror or a sword, should also be placed upon his stomach, because the corpse of the deceased becomes puffed up and inflated when his spirit has departed.

Then he should be laid out on the bench for his ritual washing [*ghusl*], arranged so that his body is sloping down toward his feet.

³⁸⁶ The Sūra entitled *Yā Sīn* is the 36th Sūra of the Qur’an.

Prompt measures should then be taken to discharge his obligations, and to relieve him of all responsibility for debts and legacies, so that he can meet his Lord in a state of innocence, free of any liability for acts of injustice, exempt from unpaid dues and unfulfilled commitments.



c.

Concerning the ritual washing [*ghusl*], grooming [*tajhīz*], shrouding [*takfīn*] and burial [*dafn*] of the deceased.

As soon as the abovementioned matters have been duly attended to, no time should be wasted in performing the ritual washing [*ghusl*] of the deceased, followed by his grooming [*tajhīz*], his shrouding [*takfīn*] and his burial [*dafn*]. There should be no delay, unless the person's death has occurred suddenly and unexpectedly, in which case these actions must be postponed until his death has been established with absolute certainty. His palms must be unclenched, his legs unbent, his nose running, and his temples sunk into his head; only then can the process be expedited.

As for the ritual washing [*ghusl*], it may be described as follows:

The ritual washer [*ghāsīl*] must lay the corpse bare, though keeping it veiled from the navel to the knees, because this is most convenient for him, and most conducive to a really thorough washing. He must avert his gaze as much as possible, especially from the area of the private parts [*ʿawra*]. (Some authorities maintain that it is most appropriate for him to wash the corpse inside a loosely fitting gown, made from a light material. If it proves to be too tight, he can always split the stitching at the top of the panels.)

Then he must gently loosen its joints, if it is easy for him to do so. If not, he should leave them alone, because the use of force might result in their being broken, and the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) has told us:

Breaking the bone of the corpse is like breaking it when the person is alive.

Then he should bend the dead body slightly, enough to bring it close to the sitting position. He should then squeeze its belly, applying only gentle pressure.

Next, he should wrap a rag around his hand, as a precaution against touching the private region [*awra*] of the corpse with his hand, and also because the rag is a more effective means of removing the dirt, on account of its rough surface. He is likewise recommended to avoid touching the rest of the body, except with the rag. He should keep pouring water over his hand, then throw the rag away and replace it with one that is clean. Then, after repeating this process three times, he should discard the rag completely, and give his hand a thorough wash.

He should then proceed to give the corpse the ritual ablution [*wuḍūʿ*] that is normally performed in preparation for the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], following the prescribed sequence. This means that he must begin by formulating the intention, and then invoke the Name of Allāh. He must insert his two fingers, wet with water, between the lips of the corpse, and rub its teeth. He must do the same with its nostrils, in order to clean them out. He must pour water over its mouth and its nose, as if for the actions called *maḍmaḍa* [moving water all around inside the mouth, then spitting it out and ejecting it] and *istinshāq* [snuffing water up the nostrils, then blowing it out]—except that the water will not actually enter the mouth and nose of the corpse.

He must proceed in this fashion, until he has performed the ritual ablution [*wuḍūʿ*] on the last member of the body [for which it is prescribed]. Next, when he has finished that part of his task, he must wash the head of the corpse with water and the ground leaves of the lotus tree [*sidr*]. Then he must wash its beard. He should not comb the hair, however.

Then he must pour fresh water over the entire body, from its head to its feet, and thoroughly wash its right side. Then he must turn it over to the left, and give its left side a thorough wash. He must wash the rest of the body in similar fashion, using water and lotus leaves in each act of washing, but he should also wipe it dry immediately after each washing with lotus leaves and fresh water. If he needs waterskins for washing dirt away, and a spike for cleaning out what lies beneath the nails of fingers and toes, he may use such implements. He may also wrap cotton around the spike, in order to remove unpleasant substances from the nose and the ear canals, and to make them properly clean.

Then [having completed the first washing of the corpse] he should begin the process all over again. He should bend the body, then repeat

its ritual ablution [*wuḍūʿ*] a second time, in the manner we have described.

Then [having completed the second washing of the corpse] he should wash it for the last time, using water containing camphor. Then he must wipe it dry with a piece of cloth.

(The corpse must be washed at least three times, and seven times at most. If three washings are not sufficient to make it properly clean, it should therefore be given extra washings, up to a maximum of seven. Whatever the final total, however, it must always be an odd number, in other words, three or five or seven.)

If something is excreted from the corpse after that [third washing], the washing should be repeated up to seven times. If that is still not enough to put a stop to the excretion, the orifice should be plugged with cotton, and covered with a patch and hot perfume. According to some of our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, however, the corpse should not be plugged, because Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) disapproved of the practice.

According to certain authorities, if something is excreted from the corpse after the washing has been completed, the entire process of washing should not be repeated. Further washing should rather be confined to the place of the impurity.

Then the corpse should be given the ritual ablution [*wuḍūʿ*] that is normally performed in preparation for the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], wrapped in its shroud, and carried to the place of burial.

The best practice is to perform the first washing of the corpse with water and ground lotus leaves [*sidr*], and the rest of the washings with pure water, as in the ritual ablution normally performed to remove a state of major impurity [*ghuṣl al-janāba*]. Camphor should be added in the final washing, then the corpse should be wiped dry and wrapped in its shroud.



The shrouding [*takfīn*] of the corpse.

As for the shrouding [*takfīn*] of the corpse, three pieces of cloth are used for the purpose of wrapping it completely. They must be plain white sheets [*lafā'if*]. They must not include any kind of shirt or gown [*qamīṣ*], waist wrapper [*mi'zar*], baggy trouser pants [*sarāwīl*], or anything stitched or sewn. The sheets themselves may be stitched, however, if the available cloth would otherwise be too narrow and too small.

The sheets must be spread out, one on top of the other, after they have been fumigated with aloeswood [*'ūd*], incense [*nadd*]³⁸⁷ and camphor [*kāfir*]. Perfume should also be placed between each pair of sheets.

According to certain authorities, however, the corpse must be shrouded in a gown [*qamīṣ*], a waist wrapper [*mi'zar*] and a sheet [*lafīfa*]. The waist wrapper should be next to the skin of the corpse, and the gown should not be buttoned up over it.

Three pieces of plain cloth are more appropriate, in view of the fact that [the Prophet's wife] 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said:

“Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was shrouded in three pieces of white cotton cloth, none of them being a gown [*qamīṣ*] or a turban [*'imāma*].”

Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) confirmed the authenticity of the tradition [*ḥadīth*] of 'Ā'isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her), and he based his doctrine [*madhhab*] upon it.

The perfume, consisting of an embalming mixture [*ḥanūt*]³⁸⁸ and camphor, should then be placed in a piece of cotton. Some of this

³⁸⁷ According to some of the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *nadd* or *nidd* is applied to a compound of aloeswood aromatized with musk, ambergris and frankincense. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *N-D-D*.)

³⁸⁸ According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *ḥanūt* is applied to “odiferous substances of any kind that are mixed for a corpse, in particular, or for grave-clothes and for the bodies of the dead, consisting of musk, or ambergris, or camphor, or Indian cane, or sandalwood, bruised..., and other things that are sprinkled upon it for the purpose of perfuming it and drying up its moisture.” (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *H-N-T*.)

should be inserted between the buttocks of the corpse, and kept there by fixing a rag on top of it. The rest of it should be applied to the parts of the body that touch the ground in the act of prostration [*sujūd*],³⁸⁹ and to places where the skin is creased, like the thighs, under the armpits, the facial apertures, the ear holes, the brow, the knees, the palms of the hands, and the area outside the eyes. The embalmer must not insert the mixture into the eyes themselves. If he is afraid that the state of purity may be annulled, and that what is inside the body may be excreted to the outside, he should plug the inside of the nose and the ear holes with cotton and camphor. If he perfumes the whole of the corpse with camphor and sandalwood, that is even better. As we learn from the traditional report of Nāfi‘, Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) used to apply musk to the creases and elbows of the corpse.

Next, he should fetch the corpse and set it down on the sheets. He should fold one edge of the uppermost sheet over the right side of the corpse, then pull the other edge over its left side, thereby wrapping it completely in the sheet. Then he should do the same with the second and third sheets in turn, placing the one beside his head away from the one beside his feet. Then, having tucked the top edges together as they are tucked in a turban, he should repeat the process over the face and the feet, unless he has reason to fear that the tucked edges could come apart, in which case he should knot them together. Then, when the corpse is laid in the grave, he should untie the knots, without creating any gap in the shroud [*kafan*].



³⁸⁹ The act of prostration [*sujūd*] is performed during the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*]. The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

I have been commanded to perform the act of prostration [*sujūd*] by resting on seven bones.

That is to say: (1) the skull bone in the forehead, (2,3) the bones in the two hands, (4,5) the two kneecaps, and (6,7) the bones in the two big toes.

The shrouding [*takfīn*] of a female corpse.

As for the corpse of a woman, it must be shrouded in five pieces of cloth, namely, a shawl [*izār*], a smock or chemise [*dirʿ*], a head-and-face veil [*khimār*], and two plain sheets [*lifāfatāin*]. Her corpse must be wrapped in these completely, and the shawl alone must be big enough to envelop her entire body.

According to some of our fellow [Ḥanbalī] scholars, it is recommended that a fifth piece of cloth should be used in her case, for the purpose of binding her thighs together. [The pieces are still five in number] so this will take the place of one of the two sheets.

The hair of the female corpse should be braided in three plaits, and should be arranged so that it hangs down behind her. Both the male and the female should be treated to the kind of preparation given to a bride or bridegroom.

If the circumstances are such that it is not feasible to provide the female corpse with all that we have mentioned, even one single piece of cloth can serve the necessary purpose.



The washing, shrouding and burial of a ritually consecrated pilgrim [*muḥrim*].

As for the ritually consecrated pilgrim [*muḥrim*], his corpse should be washed with water and ground lotus leaves [*sidr*]. It should not have perfume applied to it. Neither the head nor the feet should be veiled, and the corpse should not be clothed in anything that has been stitched or sewn. It must be shrouded only in the two pieces of cloth [worn by the pilgrim in a state of consecration], because Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) is reported as having said:

“Suddenly, while Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was waiting at ‘Arafa, a man who was also waiting there [as a pilgrim] fell down from his riding camel, and the animal broke his neck. So Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) said:

“Wash him with water and ground lotus leaves [*sidr*], and shroud him in the two pieces of cloth he is wearing [as a ritually consecrated pilgrim]. Do not veil his head, for, when Allāh brings him forth on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], he will be uttering the pilgrim’s cry of readiness to serve his Lord [*mulabbīyan*].”³⁹⁰



³⁹⁰ That is to say, he will be pronouncing the *talbiyya* [expression of willing compliance]. In the context of the Pilgrimage [*Hajj*], the term *talbiyya* refers to the declaration, repeatedly uttered by the pilgrim:

Doubly at Your service, O Allāh!
 Doubly at Your service!
 No partner have You!
 Doubly at Your service!
 Yours is the praise and the gracious favor,
 and Yours is the kingdom!
 No partner have You!

labbaika Allāhumma
labbaik
lā sharīka laka
labbaik
inna 'l-ḥamda wa 'n-ni' mata laka
wa 'l-mulku lak
lā sharīka lak.

The ritual washing of the miscarried fetus [*ghusl as-siqṭ*].

As for the miscarried fetus [*siqṭ*], if it is delivered after more than four months in the womb, it should be given a ritual washing and a funeral prayer.³⁹¹ If it is not clear whether it is a male or a female, it should be given a name that is equally suitable for a person of either sex.

In a case of this sort, it does not matter whether the washing is performed by a man or by a woman, because the women washed the corpse of Ibrāhīm, the son of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), when he died at the age of eighteen months. This fact is mentioned in the tradition [*ḥadīth*] of Umm ‘Aṭiyya (may Allāh be well pleased with her).



³⁹¹ As Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained on pp. 279–80:

In the case of a miscarried fetus [*siqṭ*], the funeral prayer and ritual washing may also be required, but only if it has developed to the point where the shape of a human being is already apparent. If it is merely a piece of flesh, in which no embryonic form can be discerned, it should simply be buried, with neither ritual washing nor funeral prayer.

**With certain exceptions, the ritual washing
should be performed by a person of the same
sex as the deceased.**

The ritual washing of a male corpse should normally be performed by a man, and of a female corpse by a woman. If the wife washes the corpse of her husband, however, this is permissible; on this point there is no disagreement in the [Ḥanbalī] school [*madhhab*]. The same rule applies to the mother of the male child. As to whether the husband may wash the corpse of his wife, there are two conflicting reports [of the Ḥanbalī doctrine], although it is known for a fact that ‘Alī performed the funeral washing of [his wife] Fātima the Radiant [*az-Zahrā’*] (may Allāh be well pleased with them both).³⁹²



³⁹² Fātima the Radiant [*az-Zahrā’*], daughter of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him piece), became the wife of the latter’s cousin, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and bore him two sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusain. May Allah be well pleased with them all.

Defraying the cost of the shroud [*kafan*].

As a charge on a man's estate, the cost of his shroud [*kafan*] takes precedence over the settlement of his debts and the distribution of his testamentary disposition [*waṣiyya*]. If he has no property, the cost must be defrayed by the person responsible for his maintenance. If there is no such person, the expense must be met from the public treasury [*bait al-māl*]. The same applies to the cost of a woman's shroud, which is not incumbent upon her husband.



The burial [*dafn*].

The best practice is for the burial [*dafn*] of the corpse to be carried out by the same person who took charge of its ritual washing [*ghusl*]. The grave [*qabr*] should be dug to the depth of one fathom [*qāma*]³⁹³ and an arm's length [*busta*]. Its length should be three cubits and a span, and in width it should measure one cubit [*dhirā'*]³⁹⁴ and a span [*shibr*].³⁹⁵ This is in accordance with the words addressed by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

How will it be for you, when a hole in the ground is made ready to receive you, three cubits and a span [in length] by one cubit and a span in width? Then your family will approach you, to wash you and shroud you and embalm you. Then they will carry you [to your grave], in order to bury you in it. Then they will pile the earth on top of you. Then they will go away and leave you....³⁹⁶

Following the recommended practice, the corpse should be drawn headforemost from the bier. If this is too difficult, however, it may be taken from the side of the grave, or from whichever direction happens to be easiest. This is in accordance with one report of the doctrine of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him).

As for the corpse of a woman, its burial [*dafn*] should be carried out by women, just as they take charge of its ritual washing [*ghusl*]. If this is impracticable in a particular instance, the task should be performed by men who are closely related to her. If this is also unfeasible, it should be carried out by old men who are unrelated to her.

³⁹³ The *qāma* [fathom] is equal to six feet.

³⁹⁴ As a unit of length, the Arabic term *dhirā'*—like the medieval English cubit—is based on the length of the forearm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. While it is usually equal to about 18 inches, it sometimes signifies a length of 21 inches or even more. (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *DH-R-'*.)

³⁹⁵ A span [*shibr*] is defined by the Arabic lexicographers as “the space between the extremity of the thumb and the little finger, when extended apart in the usual manner.” (See E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *SH-B-R*.)

³⁹⁶ **Author's note:** This is only a partial quotation of the tradition [*ḥadīth*], which continues beyond this point.

It is recommended that her grave should be veiled, as opposed to that of a man, because she is subject to concealment [*ʿawra*]. ‘Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) once passed by a group of people, just when they had spread a cloth over [the grave of] of man, so he pulled it away and said: “This treatment is appropriate only for women.”

As soon as the corpse has been laid to rest in the grave, facing toward the *Qibla* [direction of the Kaʿba in Mecca], three handfuls of dust should be scattered over it. That is in accordance with the Sunna [the exemplary practice of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace)]. Then the earth should be heaped on top of the corpse.

The grave should be raised above the ground to the extent of one span [*shibr*].³⁹⁷ Water should be sprinkled over it, and pebbles should be placed upon it. If it is coated with clay, this is permissible, but the application of whitewash is subject to disapproval.

It is customary to give a humped shape to the surface of the grave, rather than to make it flat, because al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) is reported as having said:

“I noticed that the grave of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was humped in shape, as were those of his Companions.”

When the person in charge has finished the interment [*taqbir*] of the corpse, it is customary for him to address the deceased, prompting him to respond. This practice is based on the traditional report of Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him), who stated that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

When one of you has died, and you have spread the dust upon him, one of you should stand at the head of his grave, and then say: “O So-and-so, son of the lady So-and-so!” For he will hear, although he will not answer. Then the prompter should say a second time: “O So-and-so, son of the lady So-and-so!” For he will then sit up straight. Then the prompter should say again: “O So-and-so, son of the lady So-and-so!” For then he will say, although you will not hear him: “Guide us aright! May Allāh bestow His mercy upon you!”

So then the prompter should say: “Remember that with which you left the abode of this world, namely, the testimony [*shahāda*] that there is no god but Allāh [*an lā ilāha illa ʿllāh*], and that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger [*wa anna Muḥammadan ʿabdu-hu wa Rasūlu-hu*]. Remember that you are well pleased with Allāh as a Lord [*Rabbān*], and with Islām as a religion [*dīman*], and with Muḥammad as a Prophet [*Nabiyyān*], and with the Qurʾān as a leader [*imāman*].” For [the interrogating angels] Munkar and Nakīr⁵³¹ will then say: “We shall not sit beside this one, for he has already stated his case.”

³⁹⁷ See note 395 on p. 299 above.

“O Messenger of Allāh,” a man asked, “what if the prompter does not know the name of the mother of the deceased?” So he told him: “In that case, he may simply address him as the son of Eve [*Hawwā'*].”

If he wishes to do so, it is quite permissible for the prompter to add: “And [that you are well content] with the believers [*mu'minīn*] as brothers [*ikhwānan*], and with the Ka'ba as a direction in which to turn in prayer [*qiblatan*],” and other such distinctive features of Islām.

* * * * *

This brings us to the end of the Chapter in which we have provided a concise treatment of certain special ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*], namely:

1. The ritual prayer of the Friday congregation [*ṣalāt al-jum'a*].
2. The ritual prayer of each of the Two Festivals [*ṣalāt al-Idain*].
3. The ritual prayer for relief from drought [*ṣalāt al-istisqā'*].
4. The ritual prayer at the eclipse of the sun [*ṣalāt al-kusūf*] and at the eclipse of the moon [*ṣalāt al-khusūf*].
5. The ritual prayer in time of danger [*ṣalāt al-khawf*].
6. The shortened version of the ritual prayer [*qaṣr aṣ-ṣalāt*].
7. The combination of two ritual prayers [*al-jam' baina ṣ-ṣalātain*].
8. The ritual prayer at the funeral service [*aṣ-ṣalāt 'ala 'l-jināza*].

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
 [*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*].



CHAPTER TEN

Concerning the special qualities of the
[voluntary] ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*]
performed in the daytime on each
of the days of the week.³⁹⁸

1.

Traditional reports concerning
[voluntary] ritual prayers performed during the
daytime [*ṣalawāt an-nahār*].

As for what has come down to us on the subject of the daytime ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt an-nahār*], one item is the traditional report, transmitted on the authority of Abū Salama, according to which Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to me:

“Whenever you are about to go out of your place of residence, you should perform two cycles of ritual prayer [*fa-ṣalli rak’atayn*], for they will prevent you from making a bad exit, and whenever you enter your place of residence, you should likewise perform two cycles of ritual prayer, for they will prevent you from making a bad entrance.”

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Malik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said, with reference to the prayer of daybreak [*ṣalāt aṣ-ṣubḥ*]:

Whenever someone performs the ritual ablution [*tawaddū’*], then sets out for the mosque [*masjid*], and then performs the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] inside it, for every

³⁹⁸ While some of the ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*] discussed in this Chapter are obligatory in themselves, the emphasis here is on their performance in congregation [*jamā’at*], which, while strongly recommended, is not strictly compulsory.

step he takes, he will be credited with a good deed, and a bad deed will be erased from his record. Moreover, the good deed will carry the value of ten of its kind. If he performs the ritual prayer [*ṣallā*], then takes his leave [from the mosque] at the rising of the sun, Allāh (Exalted is He) will record a good deed in his favor for every hair on his body, and he will return home with an accepted Pilgrimage [*Hijja mabrūra*]³⁹⁷ to his credit.

If he sits until he is ready to perform a cycle of prayer [*ḥattā yarkaʿa*], for every act of sitting [*jalsa*] Allāh (Exalted is He) will record a million good deeds in his credit column.

Whenever someone performs the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿatama*],³⁹⁹ he is entitled to receive a similar reward, and he will return home with an accepted Visitation [*ʿUmra mabrūra*]⁴⁰⁰ to his credit.

[The Caliph] ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “I once heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

“When someone performs the late evening prayer [*ṣalāt al-ʿishāʿ*] in a congregation [*jamāʿa*], it is as if he has devoted half the night to worship. And when someone performs the dawn prayer [*ṣalāt al-fajr*] in a congregation [*jamāʿa*], it is as if he has spent the entire night in prayer.”

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

No ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] is more burdensome for the hypocrites [*munāfiqīn*] than the prayer of late evening and that of the dawn [*ṣalāt al-ʿishāʿ waʾl-fajr*]. If they did but know what [blessings] these two contain, they would surely come to perform them, even if they had to come crawling on their hands and knees! I once considered the idea of ordering my servants to gather firewood, so I could make it too hot for men who do not attend [the congregation] with us to stay in their houses!

According to ʿAṭāʾ ibn Yasār, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs four cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣallā arbaʿa rakaʿāt*] after the sun has declined from the meridian, paying proper attention to their Qurʾānic recitation [*qirāʿa*] and to their acts of bowing [*rukūʿ*] and prostration [*sujūd*], seventy thousand angels will pray together with him, begging forgiveness on his behalf until the night sets in.

³⁹⁹ The term *Hijja* is applied to a specific performance of the *Hajj* [Pilgrimage]. For a full account of the rites of *Hājj* [Pilgrimage] and *ʿUmra* [Visitation; Lesser Pilgrimage], see Vol. 1, pp. 26–52.

⁴⁰⁰ See Vol. 1, pp. 44 and 47.

According to this same report, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) went on to say:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) would never fail to perform four [voluntary cycles of prayer] after the sun’s decline from the meridian. He would prolong them, and he used to say:

“The gates of heaven are opened at this hour, so I would like to have a good deed of mine rise up into it.’

“Someone asked: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, is there a [ritual salutation of] “Peace!” in them, marking a division [of the four cycles into two segments]?’ ‘No,’ said he (Allāh bless him and give him peace).”

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is also reported as having said:

May Allāh bestow His mercy upon any servant [of His] who performs four [voluntary cycles of prayer] before [the obligatory ritual prayer of] the afternoon [*al-‘aṣr*].



2. Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Sunday [*ṣalāt yawm al-aḥad*].

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs four cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣallā arbaʿa rakaʿāt*] on a Sunday—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] in each cycle, and [the passage that begins with] “*Āmana ʿr-Rasūlu...* [The Messenger believes...]” (2:285) one time—Allāh (Exalted is He) will record in his favor a number of good deeds, a number corresponding to the total figure arrived at by counting every Christian man and Christian woman [*Naṣrānī wa Naṣrāniyya*]. He will grant him the spiritual reward of a Prophet [*Nabī*]. He will record a Pilgrimage [*Hijja*] and a Visitation [*ʿUmra*] in his credit column. For each cycle [*rakʿa*], He will credit him with a thousand ritual prayers [*alf ṣalāt*]. Then, for every letter [in the words of his Qurʾānic recitation], Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him, in the Garden of Paradise, a city constructed from the most fragrantly aromatic musk.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of [the Caliph] ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Affirm the Oneness of Allāh (Exalted is He) by performing the ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] frequently on Sunday, for He is Single [*Wāḥid*], without any partner [*lā sharīka la-h*]. If someone performs four [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣallā arbaʿa rakaʿāt*] on a Sunday, after the noon prayer [*ṣalāt az-ẓuhr*] that is strictly obligatory [*farīḍa*] and that which is customary [*sunna*][—]reciting, in the first cycle, the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and the Sūra of Prostration [*as-Sajda*], which begins with “*Alif-Lām-Mīm...*,” (Q. 32) and, in the second cycle, the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and the Sūra of Sovereignty [*al-Mulk*], which begins with “*Tabāraka...* [Blessed is He...];” (Q. 67) then pronouncing the testimony and the salutation [*yataṣahḥad wa yusallim*]; then standing up and proceeding to perform the last two cycles, reciting in both of them the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and the Sūra of the Congregation [*Sūrat al-Jumuʿa*]; (Q. 62) and asking [in his supplication] for his need to be satisfied—it will be an obligation [*ḥaqq*] incumbent upon Allāh (Exalted is He) to satisfy his need, and to declare him innocent of the errors committed by the Christians [*Naṣārā*].

3. Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Monday [*ṣalāt yawm al-ithnain*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abu 'z-Zubair, on the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdi 'llāh [al-Anṣārī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atain*] at daybreak on a Monday—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] once in each cycle, the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴⁰¹ one time, “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']”⁴⁰² one time, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge [*al-Mu'awwidhatain*]⁴⁰³ one time each—and if, when he pronounces the salutation [*idhā sallama*], he appeals ten times to Allāh for forgiveness, and invokes His blessing upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) ten times—Allāh will forgive him all his sins.

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted by Thābit al-Bunānī, on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣallā ithnatai 'ashrata rak'a*] on a Monday, reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] in each cycle, and the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*] one time—and if, when he has concluded his performance of the prayer [*ṣalāt*], he recites “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']” twelve times, and seeks forgiveness twelve times—an angelic voice will call for him on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], saying: “Where is So-and-so, the son of So-and-so? Let him step forward to receive his reward from Allāh (Exalted is He)!” He will then be given, as the first part of his reward, a thousand fine articles of clothing. A crown will be placed upon his head, and he will be told: “Enter the Garden of Paradise!” A thousand angels will bid him welcome, each angel bearing a gift, and they will escort him on a tour of a thousand palaces constructed from glittering light.

⁴⁰¹ Q. 2:255.

⁴⁰² Sūra 112.

⁴⁰³ Sūra 113 and Sūra 114.

4.
Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on
a Tuesday [*ṣalāt yawm ath-thalāthā'*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by Yazīd ar-Raqāshī, on the authority of Mālik ibn Anas (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs ten [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*raka'āt*] on a Tuesday, in the middle of the day—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] once in each cycle, the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴⁰⁴ one time, and “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']”⁴⁰⁵ three times—no sinful error will be recorded in his debit column for seventy days. Then, if he dies before the seventy days are up, he will die as a martyr [*shahīd*], and he will be forgiven the sins of seventy years.



⁴⁰⁴ Q. 2:255

⁴⁰⁵ Sūra 112.

5.
Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on
a Wednesday [*ṣalāt yawm al-arbaʿāʾ*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī, on the authority of Muʿādh ibn Jabal (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*ithnatai ʿasharata rakʿa*] on a Wednesday, at the high point of the day—reciting the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] in each cycle, the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴⁰⁶ one time, “*Qul Huwaʾllāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”⁴⁰⁷ three times, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge [*al-Muʿawwidhatayn*]⁴⁰⁸ three times—an angel will call out to him from beside the Heavenly Throne [*ʿArsh*]: “O servant of Allāh, you may now set to work with a clean slate, for all your previous sins have been forgiven!” Allāh will exempt him from the torment of the tomb, and from its narrowness and gloom. He will also exempt him from the terrible hardships of the Resurrection, and He will accept his day’s work with the honor conferred on the work of a Prophet [*Nabī*].



⁴⁰⁶ Q. 2:255.

⁴⁰⁷ Sūra 112.

⁴⁰⁸ Sūras 113 and 114.

6.
Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on
a Thursday [*ṣalāt yawm al-khamīs*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by ‘Ikrima, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rak‘atāin*] on a Thursday, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] noon [*aḡ-ḡuhr*] and afternoon [*al-‘aṣr*]⁴⁰⁹—reciting in the first cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḡat al-Kitāb*] one time, and the Verse of the Throne [*Ayat al-Kursī*]⁴¹⁰ one hundred times, and in the second cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḡat al-Kitāb*] [one time], and “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḡad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”⁴¹⁰ one hundred times—and if, when he has finished [performing the ritual prayer], he invokes Allāh’s blessing upon me one hundred times—Allāh (Exalted is He) will grant him the spiritual reward of someone who fasts in the months of Rajab, Sha‘bān and Ramaḡān. The amount of his spiritual reward will be comparable to that of a Pilgrim of the House [of Allāh] [*Ḥājj al-Bait*]. As for the good deeds to be recorded in his credit column, their number will be equal to the total figure arrived at by adding up all the people who believe in Allāh (Exalted is He) and put their trust in Him.



⁴⁰⁹ Q. 2:255.

⁴¹⁰ Sūra 112.

7. Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Friday [*ṣalāt yawm al-jum‘a*].

According to a traditional report, ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusain heard from his father that his grandfather⁴¹¹ (may Allāh’s good pleasure be upon them all) had told him: “I once heard the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

“The whole of Friday, the Day of the Congregation, is [a time devoted to] ritual prayer [*Yawm al-Jum‘a kullu-hu ṣalāt*]. If any truly believing servant of the Lord [*‘abd mu‘min*] gets up—when the sun has emerged and risen by the length of a spear, or more than that—and performs the ablution and does so thoroughly [*tawaḍḍa’ a fa-asbagha ‘l-wuḍū’*], and performs two cycles [*rak‘atāin*] of the supererogatory forenoon prayer [*subḥat aḍ-ḍuhā*],⁴¹² as an act of faith and with an attitude of total dedication [*iḥtisāb*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will record two hundred good deeds in his credit column, and He will also erase two hundred bad deeds from his debit column.

“If someone performs four cycles [*raka‘āt*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will upgrade his status in the Garden of Paradise by four hundred degrees.

“If someone performs eight cycles [*raka‘āt*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will upgrade his status in the Gardens of Paradise by eight hundred degrees, and He will forgive him all his sins.

“If someone performs twelve cycles [*ithnatai ‘asharata rak‘a*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will record one thousand two hundred good deeds in his credit column, and He will also erase one thousand two hundred bad deeds from his debit column. He will also upgrade his status in the Garden of Paradise by one thousand two hundred degrees.”

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs the [obligatory] daybreak prayer [*ṣalla ‘ṣ-ṣubḥ*] on a Friday, as a member of a congregation [*jamā‘a*], then sits in the mosque [*masjid*],

⁴¹¹ That is to say, the Caliph ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh ennoble his countenance).

⁴¹² See note 98 on p. 83, also pp. 90–921 above.

practicing the remembrance of Allāh (Exalted is He), until the sun has risen into view, he will be entitled to seventy degrees in Paradise [*Firdaws*]. Moreover, in the space between two degrees, he will have trained horses at his disposal for seventy years.

If someone performs the Friday [Congregational] prayer [*ṣalla 'l-jum'a*], as a member of a congregation [*jamā'a*], he will be entitled to fifty degrees in Paradise [*Firdaws*], and he will have thoroughbred horses at his disposal for fifty years.

If someone performs the [obligatory] afternoon prayer [*ṣalla 'l-ʿaṣr*] on a Friday, as a member of a congregation [*jamā'a*], it will be to his credit as if he had emancipated eighty of the offspring of Ishmael [*Ismā'il*], delivering each of them from slavery.

If someone performs the [obligatory] sunset prayer [*ṣalla 'l-maghrib*] on a Friday, as a member of a congregation [*jamā'a*], it will be to his credit as if he had performed a Pilgrimage [*Hijja*] blessed with acceptance and a Visitation [*ʿUmra*] worthy of approval.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Mujāhid, Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) stated that Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atāin*] on a Friday, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] noon [*aḡ-ḡuhr*] and afternoon [*al-ʿaṣr*]⁴¹³—reciting in the first cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḡat al-Kitāb*] one time, the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴¹³ one time, and “*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-Falaq* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak]”⁴¹⁴ twenty-five times; and reciting in the second cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḡat al-Kitāb*] one time, “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḡad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!]'”⁴¹⁵ one time, and “*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-Falaq* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak]” twenty times—and if, when he has pronounced the salutation [*sallama*], he says, fifty times:

There is no power,	<i>lā ḡawla</i>
nor is there any strength,	<i>wa lā quwwata</i>
except through Allāh,	<i>illā bi'llāhi 'l-</i>
the All-High, the Almighty!	<i>ʿAlīyyi 'l-ʿAạīm!</i>

—he will not depart from this world until he has seen his Lord (Almighty and Glorious is He) in a dream, and has seen his situation in the Garden of Paradise, or had it shown to him.

It is related that an Arab of the desert [*A'rābi*] once came to town to visit the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). “O Messenger

⁴¹³ Q. 2:255.

⁴¹⁴ Sūra 113.

⁴¹⁵ Sūra 112.

of Allāh,” he said, “we are out in the desert, far from the city, and we cannot come to join you every Friday. So advise me of some practice that can appropriately be observed on the Day of Congregation, and I shall tell my people about it when I return to them.” To this Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) responded by saying:

O Arab of the desert, when Friday [the Day of Congregation] comes around, perform two cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣalli rak' atain*] when the day is near its height. In the first cycle, recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fāṭihat al-Kitāb*] and “*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'l-Falaq* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak’]. In the second cycle, recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fāṭihat al-Kitāb*] and “*Qul a'ūdhu bi-Rabbi 'n-Nās* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of Mankind’].”⁴¹⁶ Then pronounce the testimony and the salutation [*tashahhad wa sallim*], and recite the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴¹⁷ seven times, remaining in a sitting posture while you do so.

Then perform eight cycles of ritual prayer [*raka'āt*], as two sets of four. In the each cycle, recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fāṭihat al-Kitāb*] and “*Idhā jā a naṣru 'llāhi wa 'l-faṭḥ...* [When the help of Allāh comes, and victory...’]”⁴¹⁸ one time, and “*Qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”⁴¹⁹ twenty-five times. Then, when you have finished performing your prayer [*ṣalāt*], say, seventy times:

There is no power,	<i>lā ḥawla</i>
nor is there any strength,	<i>wa lā quwwata</i>
except through Allāh,	<i>illā bi'llāhi 'l-</i>
the All-High, the Almighty!	<i>'Alīyyi 'L' Aẓīm!</i>

By the One who holds the soul of Muḥammad in His hand, no truly believing man [*mu'min*], and no truly believing woman [*mu'mina*], will perform this particular ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] on a Friday, exactly as I have just described it, without my being his [or her] guarantor of the Garden of Paradise. Nor will any such person leave his place [of prayer] until Allāh has granted forgiveness to him and to his parents, if they are Muslims. And an angelic herald will cry out from beneath the Heavenly Throne [*Arsh*]: “O servant of Allāh, you may now set to work with a clean slate, for all your previous and more recent sins have been forgiven!”

Many more special qualities have been attributed to it [i.e., to voluntary ritual prayer performed on a Friday], but it would take too long to mention them all here. As we have in fact mentioned previously, in connection with other special qualities, there is another [voluntary] ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], appropriately performed on a Friday, in which “*Qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]” is recited eighteen times. So, if anyone wishes to perform such a prayer, let him perform it!

⁴¹⁶ Sūra 114.

⁴¹⁷ Q. 2:255.

⁴¹⁸ That is to say, the Sūra of [Divine] Help [*Sūrat an-Naṣr*] (Q. 110).

⁴¹⁹ Sūra 112.

8. Concerning [voluntary] ritual prayer performed on a Saturday [*ṣalāt yawm as-sabt*].

According to a traditional report transmitted by Sa‘īd, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs four [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*raka‘āt*] on a Saturday—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] one time, and “*Qul yā ayyuha ’l-kāfirūn*... [Say: ‘O unbelievers...’]”⁴²⁰ three times—and if, when he has finished performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] and has pronounced the salutation [*sallama*], he recites the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴²¹—for every letter [in the words of his Qur’ānic recitation] Allāh (Exalted is He) will record a Pilgrimage [*Ḥijja*] and a Visitation [*‘Umra*] in his credit column. For every letter, He will confer upon him the merit of a whole year devoted to fasting by day and keeping vigil by night. For every letter [*ḥarf*],⁴²² Allāh will grant him the spiritual reward of a martyr [*shahīd*], and [in the Hereafter] he will be in the company of the Prophets [*Anbiyā’*] and the martyrs [*shuhadā’*] beneath the Heavenly Throne [*‘Arsh*].

* * * * *

This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning
the special qualities of the [voluntary] ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*]
performed in the daytime on each of the days of the week.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[*al-ḥamdu li’llāhi Rabbi ’l-‘ālamīn*].

⁴²⁰ Sūra 109.

⁴²¹ Q. 2:255.

⁴²² The basic meaning of the term *ḥarf* (of which *ḥurūf* and *aḥruf* are plural forms) is “a letter of the Arabic alphabet.” In some contexts, however, it may also signify “a connected group of Arabic letters, representing either a separate word, or, in some cases, a grammatical combination of two or more elements, only one of which can normally be written separately.”

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Concerning the special qualities of [voluntary] ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*] performed in the nighttime on each of the days of the week.⁴²³

1.

Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual prayer performed during the night of Sunday [*ṣalāt lailat al-aḥad*].⁴²⁴

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “I once heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

“If someone performs twenty [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*‘ishrīn rak‘a*] on a Sunday night—reciting in each cycle “*Al-ḥamdu li’llāhi...* [Praise be to Allāh...]”⁴²⁵ one time, “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”⁴²⁶ fifty times, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge [*al-Mu‘awwidhatayn*]⁴²⁷ three times—and if he begs forgiveness of Allāh (Glory be to Him) one hundred times, and begs forgiveness of Allāh for himself and his parents one hundred times, and invokes Allāh’s blessing on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) one hundred times, and renounces all personal claim to power and strength [*tabarra’ a min al-ḥawli wa ’l-quwwa*], and takes refuge in the power and strength of Allāh⁴²⁸—and if he then says:

⁴²³ While some of the ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*] discussed in this Chapter are obligatory in themselves, the emphasis here is on their performance in congregation [*jamā‘a*], which, while strongly recommended, is not strictly compulsory.

⁴²⁴ It is important to remember that the Islāmic day (in the sense of a 24-hour period) begins at sunset. This means that the night of Sunday [*lailat al-aḥad*] begins when the sun sets on Saturday.

⁴²⁵ Sura 1.

⁴²⁶ Sūra 112.

⁴²⁷ Sūras 113 and 114.

⁴²⁸ In other words, if he declares:

There is no power,
nor is there any strength,
except through Allāh,
the All-High, the Almighty!

*lā ḥawla
wa lā quwwata
illā
bi’llāhi ’L-‘Alīyyi ’L-‘Aẓīm.*

I bear witness
 that there is no god but Allāh,
 and I bear witness that Adam
 is the Choice of Allāh,
 and His Creation,
 and Abraham is the Bosom Friend
 of Allāh
 (Almighty and Glorious is He),
 and Moses is the Interlocutor
 of Allāh (Exalted is He),
 and Jesus is the Spirit of Allāh
 (Glory be to Him),
 and Muḥammad is the Beloved
 of Allāh
 (Almighty and Glorious is He).

*ashhadu an
 lā ilāha illa 'llāh:
 wa ashhadu anna Ādama
 Ṣafwatu 'llāhi
 wa Fiṭratu-h:
 wa Ibrāhīma
 Khaṭilū 'llāhi
 ('azza wa jall):
 wa Mūsā Kalīmu 'llāhi
 (ta'ālā):
 wa 'Īsā Rūḥu 'llāhi
 (subḥāna-h):
 wa Muḥammadan
 Ḥabībū 'llāhi
 ('azza wa jall).*

—he will be entitled to as many grants of recompense and reward as the total figure arrived at by counting all those who call Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) a “Son,” as well as all those who do not call Him a “Son.” On the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will bring him back to life in the company of those who have nothing to fear [*al-āminīn*], and it will be an obligation [*ḥaqq*] incumbent upon Allāh to admit him to the Garden of Paradise in the company of the Prophets [*an-Nabiyyīn*].



2. Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual prayer performed during the night of Monday [*ṣalāt lailat al-ithnain*].⁴²⁹

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of al-A‘*ash*, Anas ibn Malik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs four [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*raka‘āt*] on a Monday night—reciting in the first cycle “*Al-ḥamdu li’llāhi...* [Praise be to Allāh...]”⁴³⁰ one time, and “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”⁴³¹ ten times, and in the second cycle “*Al-ḥamdu li’llāhi...* [Praise be to Allāh...]” one time, and “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]” twenty times, and in the third cycle “*Al-ḥamdu li’llāhi...* [Praise be to Allāh...]” one time, and “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]” thirty times, and in the fourth cycle “*Al-ḥamdu li’llāhi...* [Praise be to Allāh...]” one time, and “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]” forty times—and if he then pronounces the testimony and the salutation [*tashahhada wa sallama*], and recites “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]” seventy-five times, and begs forgiveness of Allāh for himself and his parents seventy-five times, and invokes Allāh’s blessing on the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) seventy-five times, and then asks [in his supplication] for his need to be satisfied—it will be an obligation [*ḥaqq*] incumbent upon Allāh (Exalted is He) to satisfy his need.

This is actually called the Ritual Prayer of Need [*ṣalāt al-ḥāja*].

According to another traditional report, this transmitted on the authority of Abū Umāma (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rak‘atāin*] on a Monday night—reciting in the each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] one time, and “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]” fifteen times—and if he recites the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴³² fifteen

⁴²⁹ The night of Monday [*lailat al-ithnain*] begins when the sun sets on Sunday.

⁴³⁰ Sūra 1.

⁴³¹ Sūra 112.

⁴³² Q. 2:255.

times after the salutation [*taslīm*], and begs forgiveness of Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) fifteen times—Allāh (Exalted is He) will include his name among the names of those who belong to the Garden of Paradise, even if he is one of those who [would otherwise] belong to the Fire of Hell, and He will forgive him his sins of flagrant wrongdoing. For every Qur’ānic verse [*āya*] he recites, He will credit him with a Pilgrimage [*Hijja*] and a Visitation [*‘Umra*], and if he dies between that Monday and the next Monday, he will die as a martyr [*shahīd*].



3.
Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual
prayer performed during the night of Tuesday
[*ṣalāt lailat ath-thalāthā'*].⁴³³

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*ithnatai 'asharata rak'a*] on a Tuesday night—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] one time, and “*Idhā jā' a naṣru 'llāhi...* [When the help of Allāh comes...]”⁴³⁴ five times—Allāh (Exalted is He) will build him a house in the Garden of Paradise, and each of the dimensions of that house will be ten times the size of this lower world.



⁴³³ The night of Tuesday [*lailat al-thalāthā'*] begins when the sun sets on Monday.

⁴³⁴ Sūra 110.

4.
Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual
prayer performed during the night of Wednesday
[*ṣalāt lailat al-arbaʿā*].⁴³⁵

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*] on a Wednesday night—reciting in the first cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] one time, and “*Qul aʿūdhu bi-Rabbi ʿl-Falaq* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak]”⁴³⁶ ten times, and in the second cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] one time, and “*Qul aʿūdhu bi-Rabbi ʿn-Nās* [Say: I take refuge with the Lord of Mankind]”⁴³⁷ ten times—seventy thousand angels will come down from every heaven, recording the reward in his credit column until the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*].



⁴³⁵ The night of Wednesday [*lailat al-arbaʿā*] begins when the sun sets on Tuesday.

⁴³⁶ Sūra 113.

⁴³⁷ Sūra 114.

5.
Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual
prayer performed during the night of Thursday
[*ṣalāt lailat al-khamīs*].⁴³⁸

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Abū Ṣāliḥ, Abū Huraira (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs two [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*] on a Thursday night, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] sunset [*al-maghrib*] and late evening [*al-ʿishāʿ*]—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] one time, “*Qul Huwaʿllāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]” five times, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge [*al-Muʿawwidhatain*]⁴³⁹ five times—and if, when he has finished performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāti*], he begs forgiveness of Allāh (Exalted is He) fifteen times, and donates the spiritual reward for it [his prayer] to his parents—he will have discharged his obligation to them both, even if he has been undutiful [*ʿāqq*] in his treatment of them,⁴⁴⁰ and Allāh (Glorified and Exalted is He) will grant him the gracious favor that He bestows upon the champions of truth [*ṣiddīqīn*] and the martyrs [*shuhadāʾ*].⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁸ The night of Thursday [*lailat al-khamīs*] begins when the sun sets on Wednesday.

⁴³⁹ Sūras 113 and 114.

⁴⁴⁰ As Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 2, p. 110:

The undutiful treatment of one’s parents [*ʿuqūq al-wālidain*]...may mean any or all of the following: failing to respect their solemn warnings, striking them when they speak to you reproachfully, refusing to give them something when they ask you for it, or refusing to feed them when they are hungry and begging you to feed them.

Nevertheless, as the Shaikh (may Allāh be well pleased with him) also points out in Vol. 1, p. 97:

Obedience to parents cannot go so far as to include the abandonment of obligatory religious duties [*farāʿid*], such as the testimony of Islām [*ḥujjat al-islām*], the five ritual prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-khams*], payment of the alms-due [*zakāt*], an act of atonement [*kaffāra*] or the fulfillment of a solemn vow [*nadhra*].

⁴⁴¹ This is an allusion to Q. 4:69.

6.
Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual
prayer performed during the night of Friday
[*ṣalāt lailat al-jum‘a*].⁴⁴²

According to another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdi ‘llāh [al-Anṣārī] (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*ithnatai ‘asharata rak‘a*] on a Friday night, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] sunset [*al-maghrib*] and late evening [*al-‘ishā’*]⁴⁴³—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*], and “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]” ten times—it will be as if he had devoted himself to the worshipful service of Allāh (Exalted is He) for twelve whole years, by fasting every day and keeping vigil every night throughout that time.

According to yet another traditional report, this one transmitted on the authority of Kathīr ibn Salama, Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If, on a Friday night, someone performs the [obligatory] late evening ritual prayer [*ṣalāt al-‘ishā’ al-ākhirā*] in a congregation [*jamā‘a*], and follows it with the performance of the two cycles of customary prayer [*rak‘atayī ‘s-sunna*], then goes on to perform ten cycles [of additional, voluntary] prayer—reciting in each cycle “*Al-ḥamdu li’llāhi...* [Praise be to Allāh...]”⁴⁴⁴ one time, “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”⁴⁴⁵ one time, and the Two Pleas for Divine Refuge [*al-Mu‘awwidhatain*]⁴⁴⁶ one time each—and if he then performs a *witr*⁴⁴⁶ prayer of three cycles, and sleeps on his right side, with his face turned toward the *Qibla* [the direction of the Ka‘ba in Mecca]—it will be as if he had kept vigil throughout the Night of Power [*Lailat al-Qadr*].

⁴⁴² The night of Friday [*lailat al-jum‘a*] begins when the sun sets on Thursday.

⁴⁴³ Sūra 1.

⁴⁴⁴ Sūra 112.

⁴⁴⁵ Sūras 113 and 114.

⁴⁴⁶ See note 50 on p. 42 above.

The Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) also said:

Invoke Allāh's blessing upon me, many times over, in the course of the illustrious night [*al-lailat al-gharrā'*], and during the brightly shining day [*al-yawm al-aẓhar*]—on the night of Friday, the Day of Congregational Prayer [*Lailat al-Jum'a*], and then on the Day itself.



7.

Concerning the special quality of [voluntary] ritual prayer performed during the night of Saturday [ṣalāt lailat as-sabt].⁴⁴⁷

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs twelve [voluntary] cycles of ritual prayer [*ithnatai`asharata rak`a*] on a Saturday night, at some point between the [obligatory prayers of] sunset [*al-maghrib*] and late evening [*al-`ishā`*], Allāh (Exalted is He) will build a palatial mansion for him in the Garden of Paradise. It will be as if he had made a charitable donation [*taṣaddaqa*] to every believing man and woman [*mu`min wa mu`mina*]. He will be uncontaminated by the errors of Judaism [*al-Yahūdiyya*], and it will be an obligation [*ḥaqq*] incumbent upon Allāh to grant him forgiveness.



⁴⁴⁷ The night of Saturday [*lailat as-sabt*] begins when the sun sets on Friday.

A reminder concerning the importance of fulfilling one's obligatory religious duties [*farā'id*] before engaging in the performance of supererogatory devotions [*nawāfil*]; and before performing supererogatory devotions [*nawāfil*] with the intention of making up for previous omissions in the performance of obligatory religious duties [*farā'id*].

We have already discussed this topic in the Discourse on Repentance [*Majlis at-Tawba*],⁴⁴⁸ as well as elsewhere in the course of this book, but the following points deserve to be reiterated here:

The worshipper's first priority must be the complete and proper performance of all obligatory religious duties [*farā'id*] and customary observances [*sunan*]. After these have been discharged, and only then, he may engage in supererogatory devotions [*nawāfil*], whether these be connected with ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], fasting [*ṣiyām*], charitable donation [*ṣadaqa*], or any of the various forms of worshipful service [*'ibādāt*].

In all his acts of worshipful service [*'ibādāt*], of whatever type they may be, his conscious intention should be to fulfill the strict obligations [*farā'id*] that are incumbent upon him. Thus, with respect to all these [voluntary] ritual prayers [*ṣalāwāt*] we have mentioned, as being appropriate to the various nights and days of the week, the worshipper should perform them with the intention of making up [*qadā'*] for previous omissions. He will thereby acquit himself of outstanding duty [*farḍ*], and he will also obtain additional merit [*faḍl*]. Allāh (Exalted is He) will combine the two, through His grace, His mercy, and His noble generosity.

⁴⁴⁸ Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is referring to the Third Discourse of the present work. (See Vol. 2, pp. 105–208.)

Finally, once he has really and truly acquitted himself of strictly obligatory duties [*farā'id*], the worshipper may legitimately intend [*yanwī*] his performance of all that [additional worship] to be a purely supererogatory devotion [*nāfila*].

* * * * *

This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning the special qualities of the [voluntary] ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*] performed in the nighttime on each of the days of the week.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*].



CHAPTER TWELVE

Concerning certain special ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*], namely:

1. The ritual prayer of glorification [*ṣalāt at tasbīh*].
2. The ritual prayer for guidance in choosing the best option [*ṣalāt al-istikhāra*].
3. The ritual prayer for sufficient protection [*ṣalāt al-kifāya*].
4. The ritual prayer for one's adversaries in litigation [*ṣalāt al-khuṣamā'*].
5. The ritual prayer of those who are emancipated [from the Fire of Hell] in the month of Shawwāl [*ṣalāt al-ʿutaqā' fi Shawwāl*].
6. The ritual prayer for the removal of the torment of the tomb [*aṣ-ṣalāt li-raf' ḥadhāb al-qabr*].
7. The ritual prayer for help in time of need [*ṣalāt al-hāja*].



1. Concerning the special merit of the ritual prayer of glorification [*ṣalāt at-tasbīḥ*].⁴⁴⁹

As for the special quality of the ritual prayer of glorification [*ṣalāt at-tasbīḥ*], we learn from a traditional report, transmitted [by a chain of reliable authorities]⁴⁵⁰ from Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to al-‘Abbās ibn ‘Abdī’l-Muṭṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

O ‘Abbās, my dear uncle! I really must give you a gift! I really must make you a present! I really must do you a favor! I really must let you know about ten special practices [*khiṣāl*], for, if you carry them out, Allāh will forgive you your sin, the first and the last of it, the old and the new, the unintentional and the deliberate, the small and the great, the private and the public.

You must perform four cycles of ritual prayer [*raka‘āt*], reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fāṭihat al-Kitāb*] and one other Sūra.

When you have finished the Qur’ānic recitation in the first cycle [*rak‘a*], and while you are still standing erect, you must say—fifteen times:

Glory be to Allāh,	<i>subhāna ‘llāhi</i>
and praise be to Allāh,	<i>wa ‘l-ḥamdu li‘llāhi</i>
and there is no god but Allāh,	<i>wa lā ilāha illa ‘llāhu</i>
and Allāh is Supremely Great!	<i>wa ‘llāhu Akbar.</i>

Then you must perform the act of bowing, pronouncing it [the same affirmation] ten times while you are in the posture of bowing [*rākī‘*].

⁴⁴⁹ The verbal noun *tasbīḥ* is derived from the three-consonant root *s-b-h*, which occurs in the expression “*subhāna ‘llāh* [Glory be to Allāh]!”

⁴⁵⁰ **Author’s note:** This report was conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’, on the authority of his father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdī’llāh ibn al-Bannā’, who cited the following chain of transmission [*isnād*]: **Abu’l-Faṭḥ Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abi ‘l-Fawāris** and **Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Khallāl** [the Vinegar Merchant]—**Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar ibn Aḥmad al-Wā‘iz** [the Preacher]—**‘Abdu’llāh ibn Muḥammad al-Baghawī**—**Ishāq ibn Abi Isrā‘īl**—**Mūsā ibn ‘Abdī’l-‘Azīz**—**al-Ḥakam ibn Abbān**—**‘Ikrima**—**Ibn ‘Abbās** (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father)—**al-‘Abbās ibn ‘Abdī’l-Muṭṭālib** (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—**the Prophet** (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

Then you must raise your head from the act of bowing [*rak'a*],⁴⁵¹ and pronounce it ten times.

Then you must perform the act of prostration, and pronounce it ten times.

Then you must raise your head from the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], and pronounce it ten times.

Then you must perform the [second] act of prostration, and pronounce it ten times.

Then you must raise your head from the posture of prostration [*sujūd*], and pronounce it ten times.

That all adds up to a total of seventy-five in each cycle [*rak'a*]. You must do the same in all four cycles [*raka'āt*].

If you are able to perform this special prayer once every day, then do so. If you cannot do it that often, then once every Friday [the Day of Congregation]. If you cannot do it that often, then once every month. If you cannot do it that often, then once every year. If you cannot do it that often, then at least once in your lifetime.

According to another version of this report, the Qur'ānic recitation should be:

In the first cycle: the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and “*Sabbiḥi 'sma Rabbi-ka 'l-A'lā... [Glorify the Name of your Lord the Most High...]*”⁴⁵²

In the second cycle: the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and “*Idhā zulzilat... [When (the earth) is shaken...]*”⁴⁵³

In the third cycle: the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and “*Qul yā ayyuḥa 'l-kāfirūn... [Say: 'O you unbelievers...]*”⁴⁵⁶

In the fourth cycle: the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and “*Qul Huwa 'llāhu Aḥad [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!]*”⁴⁵⁷

According to yet another traditional report,⁴⁵⁸ the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allāh be well pleased with him):

I really must make you a present! I really must do you a favor! I really must give you a gift!

(Our informant went on to quote the rest of the report [*ḥadīth*].)

⁴⁵¹ In this instance, the term *rak'a* is applied specifically to the act of bowing, rather than to the whole “cycle” of which it constitutes a major element. (See note 246 on p. 180 above.)

⁴⁵² Sūra 87.

⁴⁵³ Sūra 99.

⁴⁵⁴ Sūra 109.

⁴⁵⁵ Sūra 112.

⁴⁵⁶ **Author's note:** This report was conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā', on the authority of his father, Shaikh Abū 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdi'llāh ibn al-Bannā', complete with its chain of transmission [*isnād*].

2.
**Concerning the ritual prayer for guidance
 in choosing the best option [ṣalāt al-istikhāra],
 and the prayer of supplication [du‘ā’]
 appropriate to it.**

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir, it was Jābir ibn ‘Abdi’llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father) who said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to teach us how to seek guidance in choosing the best option available in a practical enterprise [*al-istikhāra fi ‘l-amr*], just as he would sometimes teach us a Chapter [*Sūra*] from the Qur’ān:

“If one of you is concerned about some practical undertaking, or about making plans for a journey, he should perform two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak‘atain*], not as an obligatory observance [*farīda*], but voluntarily. Then he should say:

“O Allāh, I ask You to show me
 what is best, through Your knowledge,
 and I ask You to empower me,
 through Your power,
 and I beg You to grant me
 Your tremendous favor,
 for You have power,
 while I am without power,
 and You have knowledge,
 while I am without knowledge,
 and You are the One who knows
 all things invisible.

*Allāhumma innī
 astakhīru-ka bi-‘ilmi-ka
 wa astaqrīru-ka
 bi-qudrati-ka
 wa as’alū-ka
 min faḍli-ka ‘l-‘azīm:
 fa-inna-ka taqdiru
 wa lā aqdiru
 wa ta‘lamu
 wa lā a‘lamu
 wa Anta
 ‘Allāmu ‘l-ghuyūb:*

O Allāh, if You know that this
 undertaking⁴⁵⁷ is in the best interests
 of my religion, my life in this world,
 and my life in the Hereafter,
 and can yield successful results in both
 the short term and the long term,

*Allāhumma in kunta ta‘lamu
 anna hādha ‘l-amra khairun lī
 fī dīni wa dunyāya
 wa ākhiratī
 wa ‘āqibati amrī
 wa ‘ājili-hi wa ājili-h:*

⁴⁵⁷ An instruction is inserted at this point in the Arabic text, to the effect that the supplicant should state the exact nature of the proposed undertaking.

then make it possible for me
and make it easy for me,
and then bless me in it.

If not, then turn it away from me,
and make it easy for me to do well,
wherever I may happen to be, and
make me content with Your verdict,
O Most Merciful of the merciful.”

fa-'qdir-hu li
wa yassir-hu li
thumma bārik li fi-h:

wa illā fa-'şrif-hu 'an-nī
wa yassir liya 'l-khaira
ḥaiṭhu kāna mā kuntu
wa raḍḍi-nī bi-qaḍā' i-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn:



2a.
**Prayers of supplication [*ad'iyā*] to be offered
 at the start of a journey and during the course of
 one's travels.⁴⁵⁸**

As soon as someone has made a definite decision to embark on a journey away from home, whether it be a business expedition, a Pilgrimage [*Ḥajj*], or a visit, he should say, immediately after performing the two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak'atain*]:

O Allāh, I intend to set out
 on this expedition of mine
 with no reliance on anyone
 other than You,
 and no expectation
 of anyone but You.
 In no power do I place my trust,
 and to no stratagem do I resort,
 apart from seeking
 Your gracious favor,
 and applying for Your kindness
 and Your mercy,
 and relying on the value
 of serving You well.

You know best,
 through Your foreknowledge,
 what has been predestined for me
 in this expedition of mine—
 both what I like and what I dislike.

O Allāh, avert from me therefore,
 through Your power,
 all possibilities of disaster,
 and dispel from me
 all trouble and sickness,

*Allāhumma innī urīdu 'l-khurūja
 fī wajhi hādha
 bi-lā thiqati min-nī
 bi-ghairi-k:
 wa lā rajā' i
 illā bi-k:
 wa lā quwwati atawakkalu 'alai-hā:
 wa lā ḥilati alja' u ilai-hā
 illā ṭalabi
 faḍli-k:
 wa 't-ta'arruḍi li-ma' rufi-ka
 wa raḥmati-k:
 wa 's-sukūni ilā ḥusni
 'ibādati-k:*

*wa Anta
 A'lamu bi-mā
 qad sabaqa lī fī 'ilmi-k:
 fī wajhi hādha
 mim-mā uḥibbu wa akrah:*

*Allāhumma fa-'ṣrif 'an-nī
 bi-quḍrati-ka
 maqāḍīra kulli balā':
 wa naffis 'an-nī
 kulla karbin wa dā':*

⁶⁵³In an earlier Chapter of the present work, where he has devoted a lengthy subsection to the good manners to be observed when traveling [*ādāb as-safar*], Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has also recommended certain traditional prayers of supplication [*ad'iyā*], which differ in some respects from those provided here. (See Vol. 1, pp. 85–90.)

and spread over me
 a wing of Your mercy,
 a gracious gift of Your help,
 a shield of Your safekeeping,
 and every form of Your protection.

wa 'bsuṭ 'alayya
 kanafan min rahmati-ka
 wa lutfan min 'awni-ka
 wa hirzan min ḥifzi-ka
 wa jamī'a mu'āfāti-k.

Then he should load up his luggage and start out on his journey,
 saying as he does so:

O my Lord, Your verdict on me
 is sure to be realized.
 Let my expectation turn out well,
 and protect me
 from that of which I am wary,
 of which You are More Aware
 than I,
 and cause that to be good for me,
 for the sake of my religion
 and my life hereafter.

yā Rabbi qadā'u-ka 'alayya
 ḥaqīqa:
 aḥsin amali
 wa 'dfa'
 'an-nī mā aḥdhiru
 mim-mā Anta A'lamu
 bi-hi min-nī:
 wa 'j'al dhālika khairan lī
 fi dīnī
 wa ākhiratī:

I beseech You, O my Lord,
 to deputize for me
 by taking care
 of those I have left behind—
 my wife,
 my children and my close relatives—
 with the best caretaking
 You ever performed
 for any believer away from home,
 in order to ensure the chastity
 of every genital organ.
 [I beg You] to provide protection
 from every cause of harm,
 to satisfy every serious concern,
 to ward off everything
 that is repugnant,
 and to grant me
 a perfect combination
 of all that contributes
 to my contentment
 and happiness in this world
 and the Hereafter.

as'alu-ka yā Rabbi
 an takhlufa-nī
 fi mā khalaftu
 warā'ī
 min ahli
 wa wuldī wa qarābatī
 bi-aḥsani mā
 khalafta bi-hi
 ghā'iban
 minā 'l-mu'minīna
 fi taḥṣīni kulli 'awra:
 wa ḥifzan
 min kulli maḍarra:
 wa kifāyata kulli muḥimm:
 wa ṣarfa kulli
 makrūh:
 wa kamāla mā
 tajma'u lī bi-hi
 minā 'r-riḍā
 wa 's-suri'ri
 fi 'd-dunyā
 wa 'l-ākhirā.

Then grant that
 I may acknowledge all of that
 by showing gratitude to You,
 by remembering You,
 and by serving You well,
 so that You will approve of me
 and cause me to enter

thumma 'rzuq-nī
 fi dhālika kulli-hi
 shukra-ka
 wa dhikra-ka
 wa ḥusna 'ibādati-k:
 hattā tardā 'an-nī
 wa tudkhila-nī

Your Garden of Paradise,
 through Your mercy
 after that approval
 O Most Merciful of the merciful.

jannata-k:
bi-rahmati-ka
ba'da 'r-riḏā:
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn:

He should repeat the following prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] frequently in the course of his travels, for the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) used to utter it frequently:

Praise be to Allāh, who created me,
 though I was a thing
 of no importance.
 O Allāh,
 help me to face the terrors
 of this world,
 and the calamities of the ages,
 and the misfortunes
 of the nights and the days,
 and guard me from the wickedness
 of what the tyrants do.

al-ḥamdu li'llāhi 'lladhī khalqa-nī:
wa lam aku shai'an
madhkūrā:
Allāhumma
a'in-nī 'alā
ahāwili 'd-dunyā
wa bawā'iqi 'd-duhūri
wa maṣā'ibi 'l-
layālī wa 'l-ayyām:
wa 'kfi-nī sharra
mā ya'malu 'z-zālimīn:

O Allāh, accompany me therefore
 in my journey, and deputize for me
 in looking after my family,
 and bless me
 in what You have provided for me,
 and make me humble in myself,
 and exalt me in the eyes
 of other people,
 and reform me in my character
 and make me dear, O my Lord, to You.

Allāhumma fi safarī
fa-ṣḥab-nī
wa fi ahli fa-'khluf-nī:
wa fi-mā razaqta-nī
fa-bārik lī:
wa fi nafsī fa-dhallil-nī:
wa fi a'yuni 'n-nāsi
fa-'azzim-nī:
wa fi khulqī fa-qawwim-nī:
wa ilai-ka yā Rabbi fa-ḥabbib-nī:

I take refuge
 with Your Noble Countenance,
 by which the heavens
 have been made to shine,
 and the darknesses
 have been dispelled,
 and the welfare of the ancients
 and the moderns has been assured,
 so that You will not cause Your anger
 to alight upon me,
 and so that You will not
 make me suffer
 Your displeasure.

a'ūdhu
bi-Wajhi-ka 'l-karīmi 'lladhī
ushriqat
bi-hi 's-samāwāt:
wa kushifat
bi-hi 'z-zulumāt:
wa ṣaluḥa 'alai-hi
amru 'l-awwālīna wa 'l-ākhirīn:
an lā tuḥilla 'alayya
ghadaba-k:
wa lā
tunzila bī
sukḥta-k:

To You belongs the credit
 for whatever I have been able to do,
 and there is no power,

la-ka 'l-'utbā
fī-ma 'staṭa' t:
wa lā ḥawla

nor any strength,
except through You.

O Allāh, I take refuge with You
from hardship on the journey,
and from trouble on the way home,
and from depletion after plenty,

and the claim of one
who has been wronged.

O Allāh, make the distance
seem short to us,
and make the journey
a smooth one for us
I beg You to convey
a communication
that conveys a blessing from You,
and forgiveness
and a sign of approval.

I beg You to grant me
all that is good,
You are indeed Powerful
over all things.

*wa lā quwwata
illā bi-k:*

*Allāhumma innī a'ūdhu bi-ka
min wa'thā'i 's-safar:
wa ka'ābati 'l-muṅqalab:
wa mina 'l-ḥawri ba'da 'l-kawr:*

*wa da'wati 'l-
maẓlūm:*

*Allāhumma 'ṭwi
la-na 'l-arḍa
wa hawwin
'alai-na 's-safar.
as'alu-ka
balāghan
yuballighu khairan
wa maghfiratan
wa riḍwānā.*

*as'alu-ka 'l-khaira
kulla-h:
inna-ka 'alā
kulli shai'in Qadīr.*

At the moment of departure from the place where he has made a halt,
the traveler should say:

In the Name of Allāh,
I put my trust in Allāh,
and there is no power,
nor any strength,
except through Allāh.

*Bismi'llāhi
tawakkaltu 'ala 'llāh:
wa lā ḥawla
wa lā quwwata
illā bi'llāhi.*

—for, according to the traditional report [*khabar*], he will then be
told:

You are protected,
guarded and shielded.

*wuqīta
wa kufīta wa ḥumīt.*

On mounting his riding camel [*rāhila*], he should say:

Allāh is Supremely Great!

Allāhu Akbar.

—three times, and:

Praise be to Allāh!

al-ḥamdu li'llāh.

—also three times. Then he should say:

Glory to the One who has made
this subservient for us (to use),

*subḥāna 'lladhī sakhkhara
la-nā ḥādha*

for we would not
have been equal to the task.
(43:13)

*wa mā kunnā
la-hu muqrinīn.*

Glory be to You!
There is no god but You.
I have wronged myself,
so forgive me.
No one can forgive sins
except You.

*subhāna-ka
lā ilāha illā Ant:
zalamtu nafsī
fa-'ghfir lī: inna-hu
lā yaghfiru 'dh-dhumūba
illā Ant.*

—because this practice is traditionally attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

According to the tradition [*ḥadīth*] of Ibn 'Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), whenever the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) went traveling, he used to say, when he mounted his means of transport:

O Allāh,
I beg You to let me practice
true devotion
in the course of this journey,
and behavior that
is pleasing to You.

*Allāhumma
innī as'alu-ka
fī safarī
hādha 't-tuqā:⁴⁵⁹
wa minā 'l-'amali
mā tarqā:*

O Allāh,
make the journey
a smooth one for us,
and make the distance
seem short to us.

*Allāhumma
hawwin
'alai-na 's-safar:
wa 'ṭwi la-na
bu'da 'l-arq:*

O Allāh, You are the Companion
on the journey,
and the Deputy in charge
of the family [left at home].

*Allāhumma Anta 'ṣ-Ṣāhibu
fī 's-safar:
wa 'l-Khalīfatu
fī 'l-ahl:*

O Allāh, keep us company
on our journey,
and deputize for us
in the interest of our family.

*Allāhumma 'ṣḥab-nā
fī safari-nā:
wa 'khluf-nā
fī ahli-nā:*

Ibn Juraij added the words:

I take refuge with You
from hardship on the journey,
and from trouble on the way home,

*innī a'ūdhu bi-ka
min wa 'thā'ī 's-safar:
wa sū'ī 'l-munqalab:*

⁴⁵⁹ The Arabic noun *tuqān* (pronounced *at-tuqā* when the definite article *al-* is prefixed to it) is virtually synonymous with *taqwā* [true devotion], the subject to which Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has devoted the Fourth Discourse of the present work. (See Vol. 2, pp. 209–303.)

and from finding
that things look bad
where my family
and property are concerned.

*wa ka'ābati 'l-
manzari
fi 'l-ahli
wa 'l-māl:*

Whenever the traveler proposes to enter a village or a town, it is appropriate for him to say what the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said, namely:

O Allāh,
Lord of the seven heavens
and all that they overshadow,
Lord of the devils
and all that they lead astray,

*Allāhumma
Rabba 's-samāwāti 's-sab'ī
wa mā aḡlalna:
wa Rabba 'sh-shayāṭīna
wa mā aḡlalna:*

I beg You to grant me the goodness
of this village,
and the goodness of its people,
and the best of what it contains.

*as'alu-ka min khairi
hādhihi 'l-qaryati
wa khairi ahli-hā
wa khairi mā fi-hā:*

I take refuge with You from its evil,
and the evil of its people,
and the worst of what it contains.

*wa a'ūdhu bi-ka min sharri-hā
wa sharri ahli-hā
wa sharri mā fi-hā:*

I beg You to grant me
the loving friendship
of the very best of them.
and to keep me from having to deal
with the worst of the worst of them.

*as'alu-ka
mawaddata
khiyāri-him:
wa an tajnuba-nī
min sharri ash-rāri-him.*



2b.
**More traditional reports concerning prayers
of supplication [*ad'īya*] for the protection
of the traveler.**

For safe refuge from every thief, predatory animal, and harmful nuisance, the traveler should offer the following prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*]:

O Allāh, keep watch over us
with Your eye that never sleeps,⁴⁶⁰
and protect us with Your support
that cannot be dislodged,
and mercifully shield us
with Your power.
that we may not perish,
for You are our hope.

*Allāhumma 'ḥrus-nā
bi-'ain-ka 'llatī lā tanām:
wa 'kfi-nā bi-rukn-ka 'lladhī
lā yurām:
wa 'rḥam-nā
bi-qudrati-ka 'alai-nā
lā nahlik
wa Anta rajā' u-nā.*

[The Caliph] 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allāh be well pleased with him) is reported as having said: “I once heard Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) say:

“If someone says, three times, in the first part of the night:

In the Name of Allāh,
in the presence of whose Name
there is nothing on earth or in
heaven that can cause any harm,
for He is the All-Hearing,
the All-Knowing.

*bismi 'llāhi
'lladhī lā yaḍurru
ma'a 'smi-hi shai'un fi 'l-arḍi
wa lā fi 's-samā':
wa Huwa 's-Samī'u 'l-
'Alīm.*

—no sudden calamity will afflict that person before he wakes up in the morning.”

According to Abū Yūsuf al-Khurāsānī, it was Abū Sa'īd ibn Abi 'r-Rawḥā' who recounted the following experience:

“I had lost my way one night on the road to Mecca, when I heard the sound of a voice behind me. I was terrified, so I listened to it—and it was reciting the Qur'ān! Then it caught up with me and said: ‘Do you

⁴⁶⁰ This is an allusion to Q. 2:255.

consider yourself lost?" 'Yes,' said I, so it went on to ask: 'Shall I teach you something to say when you are lost, so that you will be guided aright, or when you are lonely, so that you will find yourself in good company, or when you are suffering from insomnia, so that you will be able to get off to sleep?' 'Oh yes,' I replied, so the voice told me to say:

In the Name of Allāh, the All-Competent, Sublime in the demonstration of the Truth, Stern in the wielding of authority.	<i>bismi' llāhi Dhi 'sh-sha'n: 'Aẓīmi 'l- burhān: Shadīdi 's-sultān.</i>
Every day He is about some awesome business. ⁴⁶¹	<i>kulla yawmin Huwa fi sha'n.</i>
I take refuge with Allāh from Satan.	<i>a'ūdhu bi' llāhi mina 'sh-shaitān.</i>
Whatever Allāh wills, comes into being. ⁴⁶²	<i>mā shā'a 'llāhu kān.</i>
There is no power, nor is there any strength, except through Allāh.	<i>lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā bi' llāh.</i>

"So I said it, and lo and behold, my companions turned out to be close by! Then I looked for the man, but I could not find him anywhere."

Abū Bilāl, who is one of the respected narrators of tradition [*ruwāt al-ḥadīth*], remarked:

"I once lost contact with my family at Minā,⁴⁶³ so I said this, then turned to look in a certain direction—and there I was, reunited with my family!"

According to Abu 'd-Dardā' (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone says, seven times each day:	
My Protecting Friend is Allāh, who has sent down the Book, and He befriends and protects the righteous. ⁴⁶⁴	<i>inna Waliyyiyyi 'llāhu 'lladhī nazzala 'l-Kitāba wa Huwa yatawalla 'ṣ-ṣāliḥim.</i>
Allāh is enough for me; there is no god but He. In Him I have put my trust, for He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne. ⁴⁶⁵	<i>ḥasbiya 'llāhu lā ilāha illā Hū: 'alai-hi tawakkaltu wa Huwa Rabbu 'l- 'arshi 'l-'aẓīm.</i>

⁴⁶¹ This sentence is a direct quotation from the Qur'ān (55:29).

⁴⁶² This sentence is an allusion to several verses [*āyāt*] of the Qur'ān, including Q. 2:117.

⁴⁶³ Minā is a valley near Mecca, where some of the rites of the Pilgrimage [*Hajj*] are conducted.

⁴⁶⁴ This is a direct quotation from the Qur'ān (7:196).

⁴⁶⁵ This is a also direct quotation from the Qur'ān (9:129).

—Allāh (Exalted is He) will provide that person with a satisfactory solution to whatever happens to be troubling him, regardless of whether he is honest or deceitful, if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.

The following saying [*ḥadīth*] is also attributed to the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

If someone says, while in distress:

There is no god but Allāh,
the All-Forbearing, the All-Generous,
Glory be to Allāh,
the Lord of the Mighty Throne.
Praise be to Allāh,
the Lord of All the Worlds.

*lā ilāha illa 'llāhu 'l-
Ḥalīmu 'l-Karīm:
subḥāna 'llāhi
Rabbi 'l-'Arshi 'l-'Aẓīm:
al-ḥamdu li'llāhi
Rabbi 'l-'Ālamīn.*

—he will be relieved of his distress, with the permission of Allāh (Exalted is He).



3. Concerning the ritual prayer for sufficient protection [*ṣalāt al-kifāya*].⁴⁶⁶

The ritual prayer for sufficient protection [*ṣalāt al-kifāya*] consists of two cycles [*rakʿatān*], which may be performed at any time whatsoever. In each cycle [*rakʿa*], the worshipper must recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥa*] one time, “*Qul Huwaʿllāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”⁴⁶⁷ ten times, and:

Allāh will give you sufficient protection against them; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. (2:137)	<i>fa-sa-yakfi- ka-humu ʿllāh: wa Huwa ʿs-Samīʿu ʿl- ʿAlīm.</i>
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—fifty times. Then, having pronounced the salutation, he should offer the following prayer of supplication [*duʿāʿ*]:

O Allāh! O All-Merciful One!	<i>yā Allāh: yā Raḥmān:</i>
O Most Beneficent One!	<i>yā Mannān:</i>
O Most Compassionate One!	<i>yā Ḥannān:</i>
O You who are glorified in every tongue!	<i>yā Musabbaḥan bi-kulli lisān:</i>
O You whose hands are extended, offering all that is good!	<i>yā Man yadā-hu biʿl-khairi mabsūṭatān:</i>
O Protector of Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) from the confederates! ⁴⁶⁸	<i>yā Kāfiya Muḥammadan (ṣalla ʿllāhuʿalai-hi wa sallam) al-aḥzāb:</i>

⁴⁶⁶ The word *kifāya* is one of many Arabic terms for which it is hard, if not impossible, to find a satisfactory one-word equivalent in English. The basic idea conveyed by the root *k-f-y* is “enough; sufficient,” and “sufficiency” is sometimes an adequate translation of *kifāya*. In certain contexts, however, the meaning is “sufficient protection,” or even “spiritual protection” (which is ultimately sufficient for the believer, whatever suffering he or she may be exposed to in the outer life).

⁴⁶⁷ Sūra 112.

⁴⁶⁸ As explained by Yūsuf ʿAlī in his commentary on his translation of the Qurʿān (33:1): “The fifth year A.H. was a critical year in the external history of early Islam.... The Grand Confederacy against Islam came and invested Medina and failed utterly. It consisted of the Meccan Unbelievers, the desert Arabs of Central Arabia, the Jews previously expelled for treachery from Medina, the Jews remaining in Medina, and the Hypocrites led by ʿAbdullāh ibn Ubai.”

The Day of [the Battle with] the Confederates [*Yaum al-Aḥzāb*] is also known as *Yaum al-Khandaq* [the Day, or Battle, of the Trench or Moat].

O Protector of Abraham
(peace be upon him) from the fires!

wa yā Kāfiya Ibrāhīma
(‘alai-hi ’s-salām) an-nīrān:

O Protector of Moses
(peace be upon him)
from Pharaoh!

yā Kāfiya Mūsā
(‘alai-hi ’s-salām)
Fir‘awn:

O Protector of Jesus
(peace be upon him)
from the cruel tyrants!

yā Kāfiya ‘Īsā
(‘alai-hi ’s-salām)
al-jabābira:

O Protector of Noah
(peace be upon him)
from drowning [in the Flood]!

wa yā Kāfiya Nūhan
(‘alai-hi ’s-salām)
al-gharaq:

O Protector of Lot
(peace be upon him)
from the lewdness of his people!

wa yā Kāfiya Lūṭan
(‘alai-hi ’s-salām)
fuḥsha qawmi-h:

O Protector from everything, but
from Whom
nothing can be protected!

yā Kāfiya min kulli shai’in
wa lā
yukfā min-hu shai’:

O Protector of ‘Ā’isha⁶⁷⁰
(may Allāh be well pleased with her)
and of Āsiya!⁶⁷¹

yā Kāfiya ‘Ā’ishata
(radiyya ’llāhu ‘an-hā)
wa Āsiya:

Protect me from mighty affliction
due to anything at all,
so that, with Your Mighty Name
“the Almighty,” I may have nothing
whatsoever to fear and dread.

ikfi-nī ‘aẓīma ’l-balā’i
min kulli shai’in
hattā lā akhāfa wa lā akhshā
ma’a ’s-smi-ka ’l-‘aẓīmi ’l-‘azami
shai’ā.

⁴⁶⁹ As Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has explained in Vol. 1, p. 267:

We hold a good opinion of all the wives of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). We firmly believe that they are the Mothers of the Believers [*Ummahāt al-Mu’minīn*], and that ‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is one of the most excellent women in the entire universe. Allāh (Exalted is He) has declared her completely innocent of the charges [of marital infidelity] brought against her by the renegades, as we read [in the Qur’ān] and as people will go on reading until the Day of Judgment [*Yawm ad-Dīn*]. *

* This is a reference to the words of Allāh (Exalted is He):

Those who spread the slander
are a gang among you. (24:11)
They are liars in the sight of Allāh.
(24:13)

inna ’lladhīna jā’ū bi’l-īfki
‘uṣbatun min-kum:
fa-ulā’ika ’inda ’llāhi humu ’l-kādhībīn.

⁴⁷⁰ The lady Āsiya (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon her) maintained her faith in the One Almighty God in the face of cruel torment, inflicted by her husband, Pharaoh. She is mentioned, though not by name, in Q. 66:11.

4. Concerning the ritual prayer for one's adversaries in litigation [*ṣalāt al-khuṣamā'*].

The ritual prayer for one's adversaries in litigation [*ṣalāt al-khuṣamā'*] consists of four cycles [*raka'āt*], with only one salutation [*taslīma*].

In the first cycle, the worshipper must recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] [one time] and “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']”⁴⁷¹ eleven times. In the second cycle, he must recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*] [one time], “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']” ten times, and “*Qul yā ayyuha 'l-kāfirūn...* [Say: 'O unbelievers...']”⁴⁷² three times. In the third cycle, he must recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*] [one time], “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']” ten times, and “*Alhā-kumu 't-takāthuru...* [Gross rivalry distracts you...]”⁴⁷³ one time. In the fourth cycle, he must recite the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*] [one time], “*Qul Huwa'llāhu Aḥad* [Say: 'He is Allāh, One!']” fifteen times, and the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*]⁴⁷⁴ one time.

Then he must donate the spiritual reward [earned by his performance of this prayer] to his adversaries in litigation [*khuṣamā'*], so that Allāh may satisfy their claim on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*], if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills.

He must perform this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*] on seven specific occasions, namely: (1) on the first night of [the month of] Rajab; (2) on the night of the middle of [the month of] Sha'bān; (3) on the last Friday of [the month of] Ramaḍān; (4,5) on each of the two Days of Festival [*al-Īdain*]; (6) on the Day of 'Arafa; and (7) on the Day of 'Āshūrā'.

⁴⁷¹ Sūra 112.

⁴⁷² Sūra 109.

⁴⁷³ That is to say, the Sūra of Rivalry in Worldly Increase [*Sūrat at-Takāthur*] (Q. 102).

⁴⁷⁴ Q. 2:255.

5.
**Concerning the ritual prayer of those
 who are emancipated [from the Fire of Hell]
 in the month of Shawwāl**
*[ṣalāt al-‘utaqā’ fī Shawwāl].*⁴⁷⁵

As for the ritual prayer of those who are emancipated [from the Fire of Hell] in [the month of] Shawwāl [*ṣalāt al-‘utaqā’ fī Shawwāl*], we learn from a traditional report, transmitted [by a chain of reliable authorities]⁴⁷⁶ from Anas [ibn Mālik] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs eight cycles of ritual prayer [*raka‘āt*] in the month of Shawwāl, either during the night or during the day—reciting in each cycle the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] [one time] and “*Qul Huwa’llāhu Aḥad* [Say: ‘He is Allāh, One!’]”⁶⁸⁶ fifteen times—and if, when he has finished performing his ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], he glorifies Allāh [*sabbaha*] seventy times, and invokes Allāh’s blessing upon the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) seventy times—by Him who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth [*bi’l-Ḥaqqi Nabīyyan*], no servant [of the Lord] will perform this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], without Allāh causing the fountains of wisdom [*yanābi‘ al-ḥikma*] to well up in his heart, and causing his tongue to speak with wisdom, and showing him both the sickness of this world and the cure for that sickness.

By Him who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth [*bi’l-Ḥaqqi Nabīyyan*], if someone performs this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], exactly as I have just described it, that person will not raise his head from his final prostration [*sujūd*] until Allāh has granted him forgiveness, and if he dies, he will die as a martyr [*shahīd*] to whom forgiveness has been granted.

⁴⁷⁵ In the Islāmic calendar, Shawwāl is the month that follows the month of Ramaḍān.

⁴⁷⁶ **Author’s note:** This report was conveyed to us by Shaikh Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn al-Bannā’, on the authority of his father, Shaikh Abū ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abdi’llāh ibn al-Bannā’, who cited the following chain of transmission [*isnād*]: Abū ‘Abdi’llāh al-Ḥusain ibn ‘Umar al-‘Allāf—Abu ‘l-Qāsim al-Qādi [the Judge]—Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ṣiddīq—Ya‘qūb ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān—Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Ja‘far al-Marwazī—‘Alī ibn Ma‘rūf—Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd—Yahyā ibn Shubaib—Ḥamid—Anas [ibn Mālik] (may Allāh be well pleased with him)—the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).

⁶⁸⁶ Sūra 112.

Nor will any servant [of the Lord] perform this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], in the course of a journey, without Allāh making it smooth and easy for him to travel and arrive at his intended destination. If he is burdened with debt, Allāh will settle his debt. If he is needy, Allāh will satisfy his needs.

By Him who sent me as a Prophet bearing the Truth [*bi'l-Haqqi Nabīyyan*], no servant [of the Lord] will perform this ritual prayer [*ṣalāt*], without Allāh (Exalted is He) granting him—for every letter [*ḥarf*] and every verse [*āya*] [of his Qur'ānic recitation]—a *makhrafa* in the Garden of Paradise.⁴⁷⁷

Someone asked: “And what is this *makhrafa*, O Messenger of Allāh?” So he went on to explain (Allāh bless him and give him peace):

[The term *makhrafa* is applied to] orchards in the Garden of Paradise, through which the rider may travel for a hundred years without passing beyond the shade of just one of the trees that grow there.



⁴⁷⁷ According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the term *makhrafa*, or *makhraf*, denotes “a garden of palm trees,” or “an avenue between two rows of palm trees, such that one may gather, or pluck, the fruit from whichever of them he will.” (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. *KH-R-F*.)

6. Concerning the ritual prayer for the removal of the torment of the tomb [*aṣ-ṣalāt li-raf‘ ‘adhāb al-qabr*].

According to a traditional report, transmitted on the authority of ‘Abdu’llāh ibn al-Ḥasan, ‘Alī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) stated that Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone performs two cycles of ritual prayer [*rak‘atain*]—reciting in one of the two cycles the last part of [the Sūra of] the Criterion [*al-Furqān*], from “*Tabāraka ‘lladhī ja‘ala fi ‘s-samā’i burūjan* [Blessed is He who has placed in the heaven mansions of the stars]” until he reaches the end of the Sūra⁴⁷⁸—then starting into the second cycle, and reciting in it, after the Opening Sūra [*al-Fātiḥa*], from the beginning of the Sūra of the Believers [*Sūrat al-Muminīn*] until he reaches “*Fa-tabāraka ‘llāhu Aḥsanu ‘l-khāliqīn* [So Blessed be Allāh, the Fairest of creators]”⁴⁷⁹—he will be safe from the double-dealing of the jinn and of humankind. He will receive his record sheet with his right hand on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*].

He will be safe from the torment of the tomb, and safe from the greatest terror [*al-faza‘ al-akbar*].⁴⁸⁰ The Book will teach him, even if he is not an eager student. He will be relieved of poverty. Allāh will bring him [into compliance with] the law [*ḥukm*]. He will give him insight into His Book, which He has sent down to His Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). He will instill in him the evidence he will need [in order to make his case] on the Day of Resurrection [*Yawm al-Qiyāma*]. He will install a light in his heart.

Thus he will not grieve when other people grieve, and he will not be afraid when they are afraid. Light will be installed in his faculty of vision, the love of this world will be extracted from his heart, and he will be recorded in the presence of Allāh as one of the champions of truth [*aṣ-ṣiddiqīn*].

⁴⁷⁸ That is to say, Q. 25:61–77 (from the Sūra of the Criterion [*Sūrat al-Furqān*]) must be recited.

⁴⁷⁹ That is to say, Q. 23:1–14 (from the Sūra of the Believers [*Sūrat al-Muminīn*]) must be recited.

⁴⁸⁰ This is an allusion to Q. 21:103.

7. Concerning the ritual prayer for help in time of need [*ṣalāt al-ḥāja*].

According to a traditional report, transmitted by Abū Hāshim al-Ayyilī on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

If someone has a seriously pressing need, requiring Allāh’s help, he should perform the ritual ablution [*wuḍūʿ*] with proper care. He should then perform two cycles of ritual prayer [*rakʿatain*]. In the first cycle he should recite the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*],⁴⁸¹ and in the second cycle, the Opening Sūra of the Book [*Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*] and “*Āmana ʿr-Rasūlu...* [The Messenger believes...]” to the end of that passage.⁴⁸² Then, having pronounced the testimony [*tashahhud*] and the salutation [*taslīma*], he should make his plea by offering this prayer of supplication [*duʿāʿ*], for his need will then be satisfied. The words of the prayer of supplication [*duʿāʿ*] are as follows:

O Allāh! O Intimate Friend
of every lonely individual!
O Companion of
every solitary individual!
O You who are Near, not distant!
O You who are Present, not absent!
O You who are Invisible,
but not vanquished!

I beseech you
by invoking Your Name:
In the Name of Allāh,
the All-Merciful,
the All-Compassionate,
the Ever-Living,
the Eternally Self-Sustaining,
the One whom neither slumber
nor sleep can overtake.⁴⁸³

*Allāhumma: yā Muʿnisa
kulli waḥīd:
wa yā Ṣāḥiba
kulli farīd:
wa yā Qarīban ḡaira baʿīd:
wa yā Shāḥidan ḡaira ḡhāʿib:
wa yā Ḡhāʿiban
ḡaira maghlūb:*

*asʿalu-ka
biʿsmi-ka
biʿsmiʿllāhi ʿr-
Raḥmāni ʿr-
Raḥīm:
al-Ḥayyi ʿl-
Qayyūm:
alladhī lā taʿkhudhu-hu
sinatun wa lā nawm.*

⁴⁸¹ Q. 2:255.

⁴⁸² That is to say, the concluding passage of the Sūra of the Cow [*Sūrat al-Baqara*] (Q. 2:285–86).

⁴⁸³ This invocation echoes the beginning of the Verse of the Throne [*Āyat al-Kursī*] Q. 2:255.

Again I beseech you
by invoking Your Name:
In the Name of Allāh
the All-Merciful,
the All-Compassionate,
the Ever-Living,
the Eternally Self-Sustaining,
the One before whom
faces are humbled,
and voices are subdued
and hearts quake and tremble.

[I beseech You] to bless Muḥammad
and the family of Muḥammad
and to grant me a happy solution
and a way out of my problem,
and to satisfy my need.

wa as'alu-ka
bi'smi-ka
bi'smi'llāhi 'r-
Raḥmāni 'r-
Raḥīm:
al-Ḥayyi 'l-
Qayyūm:
alladhī 'anat
la-hu 'l-wujūh:
wa khasha'at la-hu 'l-aṣwāt:
wa wajilat min-hu 'l-qulūb:
an yuṣalliya 'alā Muḥammadin
wa 'alā āli Muḥammad
wa an taj'ala li min amrī
farajan wa makhrajan
wa taqdiya ḥājatī.

* * * * *

This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning:

The ritual prayer of glorification [*ṣalāt at-tasbiḥ*].

The ritual prayer for guidance in choosing the best option
[*ṣalāt al-istikhāra*].

The ritual prayer for sufficient protection [*ṣalāt al-kifāya*].

The ritual prayer for one's adversaries in litigation
[*ṣalāt al-khuṣamā'*].

The ritual prayer of those who are emancipated [from the Fire of
Hell] in the month of Shawwāl [*ṣalāt al-'utaqā' fi Shawwāl*].

The ritual prayer for the removal of the torment of the tomb
[*aṣ-ṣalāt li-raf' adhāb al-qabr*].

The ritual prayer for help in time of need [*ṣalāt al-ḥāja*].

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!

[*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*].



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Concerning prayers of supplication [*ad'īya*]
to be offered in certain special circumstances.

1.

The prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] for the
removal of oppression [*ẓulm*]
and precaution against it.

According to a traditional report narrated by Jābir ibn 'Abdi'llāh (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father), Allāh's Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) taught this prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] to [his son-in-law] 'Alī and [his daughter] Fāṭima⁴⁸⁴ (may Allāh be well pleased with them both). He said to the pair of them:

“If an affliction ever befalls you, if you are afraid of the tyrannical oppression of a worldly ruler [*jawr sultān*], or if the attainment of a long-cherished goal eludes you, perform the ritual ablution [*wuḍū'*] with proper care, perform two cycles of ritual prayer [*ṣalliyā rak'atain*], then raise your hands toward heaven and say:

'O Knower of the unseen	<i>yā 'Ālima 'l-ghaibi</i>
and of all secret things;	<i>wa 's-sarā'ir:</i>
O You who must be Obeyed!	<i>yā Muṭā':</i>
O Omnipotent One!	<i>yā 'Azīz:</i>
O All-Knowing One!	<i>yā 'Alīm:</i>
O Allāh! O Allāh! O Allāh!	<i>yā Allāh: yā Allāh: yā Allāh:</i>
O Vanquisher of the confederates	<i>yā Hāzima 'l-aḥzābi</i>
for the sake of Muḥammad	<i>li-Muḥammad</i>
(Allāh bless him	(<i>ṣalla 'llāhu 'alai-hi</i>
and give him peace);	<i>wa sallam):</i>
O Deceiver of Pharaoh for the sake	<i>yā Kā'ida Fir'awna</i>
of Moses (peace be upon him);	<i>li-Mūsā ('alai-hi 's-salām):</i>

⁴⁸⁴ The Lady Fāṭima, daughter of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), became the wife of the latter's cousin, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and bore him two sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusain. May Allah be well pleased with them all.

O Savior of Jesus
(peace be upon him)
from the hands of his oppressors;

O Rescuer of the people of Noah
(peace be upon him)
from drowning [in the Flood];

O You who took pity on the tears
of Jacob (peace be upon him);

O Reliever of the suffering of Job
(peace be upon him);

O Rescuer of Jonah
(peace be upon him)
from the threefold gloom;

O Doer of all that is good;
O Guide to all that is good;
O Director to all that is good;
O Proprietor of all that is good;
O Creator of all that is good;
O Proprietor of all good things;

You are Allāh.
I have requested of You
that which You already know,
for You are the One who
knows all things invisible.
I beseech You
to bless Muḥammad
and the family of Muḥammad.'

"Then ask for your need to be satisfied, and you will receive a positive response,
if Allāh (Exalted is He) so wills."

yā Munjiya 'Īsā
('alai-hi 's-salām)
min yadi ḡalamati-h:

yā Mukhalliṣa qawmi Nūḥin
('alai-hi 's-salām)
mina 'l-gharaq:

yā Rāḥima 'abrati Ya' qūb
('alai-hi 's-salām):

yā Kāshifa ḡurri Ayyūb
('alai-hi 's-salām):

yā Munjiya Dhi 'n-Nūn
('alai-hi 's-salām)
mina 'ḡ-ḡulumāti 'th-thalāth:

yā Fā'ila kulli khair:
yā Hādiyan ilā kulli khair:
yā Dāllan 'alā kulli khair:
yā Ahla 'l-khair:
yā Khāliqa 'l-khair:
yā Ahla 'l-khairāt:

Anta 'llāh:
aghibtu ilai-ka
fī-mā qad 'alimt:
wa Anta
'Allāmu 'l-ghuyūb:
as' alu-ka an
tuṣalliya 'alā Muḥammadin
wa 'alā āli Muḥammad.



2. Another prayer of supplication [*du‘ā’*].

This is the prayer of supplication offered [*du‘ā’*] by the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) on the Day of the Confederates [*Yawm al-Aḥzāb*],⁴⁸⁵ as reported by Ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be well pleased with him and with his father):

O Allāh, I take refuge You,
and with the light of Your Holiness,
and the splendor of Your Purity,
and the blessed grace
of Your Majesty,
from every plague and blight,
and from every nocturnal visitor,
of the jinn or of humankind,
unless it be a visitor who comes
at night with something
good from You.

You are indeed my refuge,
so with You do I take refuge,
and You are my shelter,
so with You do I take shelter.

O You before whom the necks
of cruel tyrants bow,
and by whom all the keys
of guardianship are held!
I take refuge with the majesty
of Your Countenance,
and the nobility of Your Majesty,
from Your scorn and
the removal of Your protection,
and the forgetful neglect
of Your remembrance.
and failure to persist
in giving thanks to You.

I am under Your wing
by day and by night, and in

*Allāhumma innī a‘ūdhu bi-ka:
wa bi-nūri Qudsi-k:
wa ‘azamati Ṭahārati-k:
wa barakāti
Jalāli-k:
min kulli āfatin wa ‘ahatin
wa ṭāriqi ‘l-jinni
wa ‘l-ins:
illā ṭāriqan
yaṭruqu
min-ka bi-khair:
inna-ka Anta ‘iyādhi
fa-bi-ka a‘ūdḥ:
wa Anta malādhi
fa-bi-ka alūdḥ:
yā man dhallat la-hu
riqābu ‘l-jabābira:
wa jumī‘at la-hu
maqāṭidu ‘r-ri‘āya:
a‘ūdhu
bi-jalāli Wajhi-k:
wa karami Jalāli-k:
min khizyi-ka:
wa kashfi sitri-k:
wa nisyāni
dhikri-k:
wa ‘l-inṣirāfi
‘an shukri-k:
ana fi kanafi-ka
fi laili wa nahāri:*

⁴⁸⁵ See note 468 on p. 340 above.

my sleep, in the time I spend at home,
and in my travels and my journeys.
Your remembrance is
my undergarment,
and Your praise
is my outer garment.⁴⁸⁶

There is no god but You,
so hallowed be Your Name,
and honored be
the glories of Your Countenance.

Grant me asylum from Your scorn,
and from the agony of Your torment
and the wickedness of Your servants,
and pitch over me the canopies
of Your safekeeping,
and admit me into the safekeeping
of Your providential care,
and guard me against the trials
of Your punishment,
and enrich me with goodness
from You, and with Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

wa nawmī wa qarārī:
wa za' nī wa asfārī:
dhikru-ka
shī'ārī
wa thanā' u-ka
dithārī:

lā ilāha illā Anta
tanzīhan li' smi-k:
wa takrīman
li-subuhāti Wajhi-k:

ajir-nī min khizyi-k:
wa min sharri 'adhābi-k:
wa 'ibādi-k:
wa 'ḍrib 'alayya
surādiqāti ḥifẓi-k:
wa adhkhil-nī fi ḥifẓi
'ināyati-k:
wa qi-nī sayyi' āti
'adhābi-k:
wa aghni-nī bi-khairin
min-ka wa bi-Raḥmati-k:
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.



⁴⁸⁶ The term *shī'ār* is applied to the garment that is worn next to the body, while the *dithār* is defined as “a garment which one wears for warmth, above the *shī'ār*.” According to a traditional report, the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said to the Anṣār [Helpers]: “You are the *shī'ār*, while the people in general are the *dithār*.”

3. Concerning the prayer of supplication [du‘ā’] for the dispelling of worries and the settlement of debts.

According to a traditional report transmitted on the authority of Abū Mūsā (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) once said:

Whenever a person is beset with worry or grief, he should offer a prayer of supplication [*fa’l-yad’u*] in these words:

O Allāh, I am Your servant
and the son of Your servant.
My forelock is in Your hand.
Your verdict upon me is already cast.
Your judgment concerning me is just.

*Allāhumma ana ‘abdu-ka
wa ‘bnu ‘abdi-k:
nāṣiyatī bi-yadi-k:
māḍin fiyya hukmu-k:
‘adhun fiyya qaḍā’u-k:*

O Allāh, I beseech You,
by every Name of Your Power,
by which You have called Yourself,
or which You have revealed
in Your Book,
or which You have taught
to anyone among Your creatures,
or which You have kept to Yourself
in the knowledge of the unseen.

*Allāhumma innī as’alu-ka
bi-kulli ‘smi hawli-k:
sammatī bi-hi nafsa-k:
aw anzalta-hu
fī Kitābi-k:
aw ‘allamta-hu
ahadan min khalqī-k:
awi ‘sta’ tharta bi-hi
fī ‘ilmi ‘l-ghaibi ‘inda-k:*

[I beg You] to make the Noble Qur’ān
the springtime of my heart,
and the light of my breast,
and the dispersal of my sorrow,
and the removal of my grief
and my worry.

*an taj’ala ‘l-Qur’āna ‘l-karīma
rabī’a qalbī:
wa nūra ṣadrī:
wa jalā’a ḥuznī:
wa dhahāba ghammī
wa hammī:*

Someone said: “O Messenger of Allāh, anyone who misses the opportunity to memorize these words will surely be the loser!” “Yes, indeed!” he replied (Allāh bless him and give him peace). “So you must repeat them and learn them, for if someone repeats them, as a request for what they contain, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) will remove his sorrow and prolong his happiness.”

‘Ā’isha (may Allāh be well pleased with her) is reported as having said that [her father] Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth [*aṣ-Ṣiddīq*] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), once entered her presence and said:

“Did you hear from Allāh’s Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace) the prayer of supplication [*du‘ā’*] that he used to teach us? He mentioned that Jesus the son of Mary [*‘Īsa’bnu Maryam*] (peace be upon him) used to teach it to his disciples, and that he used to say: ‘Even if one of you happened to be burdened with a debt the size of a whole mountain, Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) would settle it for him.’”

To this she replied: “He used to say:

‘O Allāh, the Dispeller of care,
the Remover of grief,
Ever-Responsive to the plea
of those in dire need,
the All-Merciful Lord of this world,
the All-Compassionate Lord
of the Hereafter,
I beseech You to bestow upon me
a mercy from You,
by which You will leave me
in no need of mercy
from anyone other than You.’”

Allāhumma Fārija ’l-hamm:
Kāshifa ’l-ghamm:
Mujība
da’wati ’l-muḍṭarrīn:
Raḥmāna ’d-dunyā
Raḥīma ’l-
ākhirā:
as’alu-ka an tarḥama-nī
raḥmatan min ‘inda-k:
tughnī-nī
bi-hā
‘an raḥmatin min siwā-k.



4.
**Another prayer of supplication [du‘ā’]
 for the same purpose [the settlement of debt].**

According to a traditional report, [Abū Sa‘īd] al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) once received a visit from a friend of his, a man who held him in very high esteem. “O Abū Sa‘īd,” said the friend, “I am burdened with a debt, and I would like you to teach me the Mightiest Name of Allāh (Exalted is He) [*Ismu’llāhi—ta‘ālā—al-A‘zam*].” So he told him: “If that is what you wish, get up and perform the ritual ablution [*tawaḍḍā’*].” The friend got up at once and performed the ritual ablution, whereupon al-Ḥasan told him to say:

<p>O Allāh! O Allāh! You are Allāh! Yes indeed, by Allāh, You are Allāh! There is no god but You! Allāh! Allāh! Allāh! By Allāh, there is no god but Allāh! Settle my debt for me, and provide for me after the debt [is settled].</p>	<p><i>yā Allāh: yā Allāh: Anta ’llāh: balā wa ’llāhi Anta ’llāh: lā ilāha illā Ant: Allāh: Allāh: Allāh: wa ’llāhi lā ilāha illa ’llāh: aqḍi ’an-niya ’d-dain: wa ’rzuq-nī ba’da ’d-dain.</i></p>
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When the next morning came around, the man discovered a hundred thousand genuine dirhams [silver coins] in the room where he performed his private prayers. These assorted silver coins were stored inside a traveling case, the top of which bore the inscription:

<p>Even if you had asked for more than this, We would have granted your request, so why did you not ask for the Garden of Paradise?</p>	<p><i>law sa’alta akthara min hādhā la-a’ṭainā-k. fa-kaifa lam tas’ali ’l- Janna.</i></p>
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The man came to al-Ḥasan (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him) and told him about this, so he accompanied his friend back to his house, where he saw the silver coins with his own eyes. Then the man said: “I feel a sense of remorse, inasmuch as I did not ask Allāh to grant me the

Garden of Paradise.” So al-Ḥasan said: “He who taught you [the invocation of] this Name [*Ism*]⁴⁸⁷ had no intention, in teaching it to you, other than to do you a good turn, for I would normally treat this Name as my personal secret. [The cruel governor] al-Ḥajjāj⁴⁸⁸ must not get to hear it, for no one at all would then be able to escape from him!”



⁴⁸⁷ The Arabic word *ism*, for which “name” is in most instances a perfectly satisfactory translation, can sometimes mean “the act of calling by a name.” The term “appellation” conveyed this latter meaning in archaic English usage, but in the modern language it almost always means “an identifying name or title.”

⁴⁸⁸ As governor of the province of ‘Irāq, in the time of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf was notorious for his cruelty and brutality. He killed many righteous men who incurred his displeasure, including Abū ‘Abdi’llāh [or Abū Muḥammad] Sa‘īd ibn Jubair ibn Hishām al-Asadī (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him), a pious Tabi‘ī [member of the generation following that of the Companions], who was renowned for his learning in Qur’ānic exegesis [*tafsīr*], Prophetic tradition [*ḥadīth*] and Islāmic jurisprudence [*fiqh*].

5.
**Another prayer of supplication [*du‘ā’*],
 taught by Gabriel (peace be upon him)
 to our Prophet Muḥammad
 (Allāh bless him and give him peace).**

This prayer of supplication [*du‘ā’*] was taught by Gabriel (peace be upon him) to our Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace), at the time when he set out from Mecca, the Ennobled City [*al-Musharrafā*], and headed for Mount Ḥirā’, in fear of Quraish⁴⁸⁹ and in pursuit of his purpose and provision.

According to the account narrated by Abū Bakr Abū Bakr, the Champion of Truth [*aṣ-Ṣiddīq*] (may Allāh be well pleased with him), Gabriel (peace be upon him) said:

“O Muḥammad, Allāh (Exalted is He) extends to you the greeting of peace [*yuqri’u-ka’s-salām*]. He has taught me a prayer of supplication [*du‘ā’*] for you to offer, so that Allāh may establish a protective screen between you and them. Shall I teach it to you now?” “Yes, O Gabriel,” said the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace), so he told him to say:

O Supremely Great One!	<i>yā Kabīru kullu kabīr:</i>
O All-Hearing One!	<i>yā Samī’:</i>
O All-Seeing One!	<i>yā Baṣīr:</i>
O You who have no partner and no minister!	<i>yā man lā sharīka la-hu wa lā waṣīr:</i>
O Creator of the sun and the shining moon!	<i>yā Khāliqa ‘sh-shamsi wa ‘l-qamari ‘l-munīr:</i>
O Safeguard of the fearful wretch who seeks protection!	<i>yā ‘Ismata ‘l-bā’isi ‘l- khā’ifi ‘l-mustajīr:</i>
O Nourisher of the little child!	<i>yā Rāziqa ‘t-tifli ‘ṣ-ṣaghīr:</i>
O Mender of the broken bone!	<i>yā Jābira ‘l-‘aẓmi ‘l-kaṣīr:</i>
O Crusher of every stubborn tyrant!	<i>yā Qāṣima kullī jabbārin ‘anīd:</i>

⁴⁸⁹ Quraish is the name of the Arab tribe into which the Prophet Muḥammad (Allāh bless him and give him peace) was born.

I beseech You
and entreat You with
the supplication,
of the wretched pauper
the supplication
of the destitute cripple,
and I beg You
by the nodes of glory⁴⁹⁰
concentrated in Your Throne,
and the keys of mercy
contained within Your Book,
and by the eight Names inscribed
on the horn of the sun,
to do such-and-such
and such-and-such with me.

as'alu-ka
wa ad'ū-ka
du'ā'a 'l-
bā'isi 'l-faqr:
du'ā'a 'l-
muḍṭarri 'd-darīr:
as'alu-ka
bi-ma'āqidi 'l-'izzī
min 'arshi-k:
wa mafāṭīhi 'r-rahmati
min kitābi-k:
wa bi'l-asmā'i 'th-thamāniyati 'l-
maktūbati 'alā qarni 'sh-shams:
an taf'ala bī
kadhā wa kadhā.

* * * * *

This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning
prayers of supplication [*ad'iya*] to be offered
in certain special circumstances.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*].



⁴⁹⁰ The word *ma'qid* (of which *ma'āqid* is the plural form) signifies “the place where a cord or rope is tied, knit, or tied in a knot or knots; a joint, an articulation.” According to the classical Arabic lexicographers, the somewhat unusual supplication *as'alu-ka bi-ma'āqidi 'l-'izzī min 'arshi-k* is understood to mean: “I beg You by the properties wherein consists the title of Your Throne to glory,” or “by the places wherein those properties are [as it were] knit together,” or simply “by the glory of Your Throne.” The use of this particular supplication is said to be viewed with disapproval by the school [*madhhab*] of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (may Allāh bestow his mercy upon him). (See: E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, art. '–Q–D.)

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Concerning the prayers of supplication [*ad'īya*]
offered after the obligatory ritual prayers
[*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-farḍ*];
the supplication following the recital
of the entire Qur'ān [*du'ā' al-khatma*]; etc.

1.

Concerning the prayers of supplication [*ad'īya*] that
may be offered immediately after the obligatory
ritual prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-farḍ*].

a.

The prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] that is most
appropriately offered immediately after the ritual prayer of
the early morning [*ṣalāt al-ghadhāh*],
and also immediately after the ritual prayer of the late
afternoon [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*].

As for the prayer of supplication [*du'ā'*] that is most appropriately
offered immediately after the ritual prayer of the early morning
[*ṣalāt al-ghadhāh*], and also immediately after the ritual prayer of the late
afternoon [*ṣalāt al-ʿaṣr*], it is expressed in the following words:

O Allāh,
to You be praise in thankfulness,
and to You
be gratitude in abundance.
By Your grace
may good works be accomplished!
We beg You, O Allāh,
to grant a prompt relief—

Allāhumma
la-ka 'l-ḥamdu shukran
wa la-ka 'l-mannu
faḍlā:
bi-ni'mati-ka
tamma 'ṣ-ṣāliḥāt.
nas'alu-ka 'llāhumma
faraḥan qarībā:

for You have always
 been Responsive—⁴⁹¹
 and a seemly patience,⁴⁹²
 and an immunity
 from all afflictions,
 and a security
 from the path of disasters,
 through Your Mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh,
 let our gathering together
 be mercifully blessed,
 and may we be safely protected
 when we go our separate ways.

Let no one amongst us
 be unprosperous,
 and let no one be deprived.
 Do not make us turn in poverty
 to others apart from You.

Do not deprive us
 of the wealth of Your goodness,
 and the real experience
 of total trust in You,
 and the genuine desire
 for that which is in Your presence.

Fill our hearts with enrichment
 provided by You,
 and clothe our faces with modesty
 in deference to You.

And grant us the goodness
 of the Hereafter,
 as well as of this world,
 through Your Mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Lord!
 O Allāh, grant that we may enjoy
 the goodness of the morning
 and the goodness of the evening,
 and the goodness
 of the verdict of fate
 and the goodness
 of the decree of destiny.

*fa-inna-ka lam
 tazal Mujībā:
 wa ṣabran jamīlā:
 wa ʿafiyatan
 min jamīʿi ʿl-balāyā
 wa salāmatan
 min ṭarīqi ʿr-razāyā:
 bi-rahmati-ka
 yā Arḥama ʿr-rāhimīn.*

*Allāhumma
 ʿjʿali ʿjtimāʿa-na ʿjtimāʿan
 marḥūman
 wa tafarruqa-nā
 tafarruqan maʿšūmā:*

*wa lā tajʿal
 fi-nā shaqīyyan
 wa lā mahrūmā:
 wa lā tarudda-nā biʿl-fāqati
 ilā ghairi-k:*

*wa lā taḥrim-nā
 siʿata khairi-ka
 wa ḥaqīqata ʿt-tawakkuli
 ʿalai-ka
 wa khāliṣa ʿr-raghbatī
 fi-mā ladai-k:*

*wa ʿmlaʿ qulūba-nā
 min-ka ʿl-ghinā:
 wa ʿksu wujūha-nā
 min-ka ʿl-ḥayāʿ:*

*wa ʿrzuq-nā
 khaira ʿl-ākhirati
 wa ʿd-dunyā:
 bi-rahmati-ka
 yā Arḥama ʿr-rāhimīn.*

*yā Rabb:
 Allāhumma ʿrzuq-nā
 khaira ʿs-ṣabāhi
 wa khaira ʿl-masāʿi
 wa khaira ʿl-
 qaḍāʿi
 wa khaira ʿl-
 qadar:*

⁴⁹¹ This is an allusion to Q. 11:61.

⁴⁹² This is an allusion to Q. 70:5.

And keep away from us
the evil of the morning
and the evil of the evening,
and the evil of the verdict of fate
and the evil of the decree of destiny.

O Allāh,
whatever You have sent down
on this day—in the way of goodness,
welfare, security, profit,
and plentiful sustenance—
grant us the most abundant
portion and share therein!

O Allāh,
and whatever You have sent down
—in the way of wickedness,
affliction, evil,
sickness, and mischief—
keep it away from us,
and from all the Muslim men
and Muslim women,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

wa 'ṣrif 'an-nā
sharra 'ṣ-ṣabāḥi
wa sharra 'l-masā'i
wa sharra 'l-qaḍā'i
wa sharra 'l-qadar.

Allāhumma
wa mā anzalta
fi hādha 'l-yawmi min khairin
wa 'afiyatin wa salāmatin
wa ghanīmatin wa si'ati rizq:
fa-'j'al la-nā fi-hi
awfara 'l-ḥaẓẓi wa 'n-naṣīb.

Allāhumma
wa mā anzalta
min sū'in
wa balā'in wa sharrin
wa dā'in wa fitna:
fa-'ṣrif-hu 'an-nā
wa 'an jamī'i 'l-muslimīna
wa 'l-muslimāt
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.



b.

Another prayer of supplication [*du‘ā’*].⁴⁹³

Praise be to Allāh,
Who has encompassed
every single thing
in knowledge,⁴⁹⁴
and Who has computed
every single thing
in number.⁴⁹⁵

There is no god but He,
the Possessor of Grandeur
and Might,
the Protective Provider
of saving grace
and mercy,⁴⁹⁶
the Ruler of this world
and the Hereafter,
Almighty in sovereign sway,
Stern in the wielding of power,
Gentle and Kind
to whatever He will,⁴⁹⁷
Effective in doing
whatever He wishes,⁴⁹⁸
the First of everything,
and the Creator of everything,
and the Sustainer thereof.

O Allāh, let our morning be
a good and righteous morning,
not one that is shameful
or disgraceful.

*al-ḥamdu li‘llāhi ‘lladhī
ahāṭa
bi-kulli shai‘in
‘ilmā:
wa aḥṣā
kulla shai‘in
‘adadā:*

*lā ilāha illā Hū:
Ahlu ‘l-kibriyā‘i
wa ‘l-‘aẓama :
wa Walīyyu ‘l-
ghaiṭhi
wa ‘r-raḥma:
Māliku ‘d-dunyā
wa ‘l-ākhirā:
‘Aẓīmu ‘l-malakūt:
Shadīdu ‘l-jabarūt:
Laṭīfun
li-mā yashā‘ :
Fa‘ālin
li-mā yurīd:
Awwalu kulli shai‘in
wa Khāliqū kulli shai‘in
wa Rāziqū-h.*

*Allāhumma ‘j‘al ṣabāḥa-nā
ṣabāḥan ṣāliḥā:
lā mukhziyan
wa lā fāḍiḥā.*

⁴⁹³ Although Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has presented this supplication [*du‘ā’*] without introductory comment, we may conclude from the wording of it that it is appropriately offered after the ritual prayer of dawn/daybreak [*ṣalāt al-fajr/ṣ-ṣubḥ*], presumably as an alternative to the one presented above.

⁴⁹⁴ This is an allusion to Q. 65:12.

⁴⁹⁵ This is an allusion to Q. 18:47.

⁴⁹⁶ The literal meaning of the word *ghaiṭh* (translated as “saving grace”) is “abundant rain.” This is an allusion to Q. 42:28.

⁴⁹⁷ Q. 12:100.

⁴⁹⁸ Q 11:107 and 85:16.

O Allāh, protect us from the worst
of Time's vicissitudes,
and its adversity,
and from the arenas of iniquity,
and the snares of the Devil,
and the despotic impositions
of the government.

Enable us, during this day of ours,
and during all other days,
to make the most
of opportunities for good,
and to avoid committing evil deeds.

O Allāh, improve our hearts,
and improve our characters,
and improve our behavior,
and improve our fathers and our sons,
and our grandfathers
and our grandmothers,
and our condition in this world
and the Other.

O Allāh,
as You have let us spend the night
in peace and well-being,
let us spend the time of day
in safety and well-being,
through Your mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh! Our Lord, give us
in this world that which is good,
and in the Hereafter
that which is good,
and guard us against
the torment of the Fire [of Hell],⁴⁹⁹
through Your mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

Āmīn, O Allāh!
Āmīn, O Allāh,
O Lord of All the Worlds!

Allāhumma 'kfi-nā sharra
nawā'iba 'z-zamāni
wa makriha-hu
wa maṣāri'a 's-sū'i
wa maṣāyida 'sh-Shaitāni
wa mawārida
ṣawlati 's-sultāni.

wa waffiq-nā fi yawmi-nā hādihā
wa fi sā'iri 'l-ayyām:
li'sti'māli 'l-
khairāti
wa hijrāni 's-sayyi'āt.

Allāhumma aṣliḥ qulūba-nā
wa aṣliḥ akhlāq-nā
wa aṣliḥ af'ala-nā
wa aṣliḥ ābā'a-nā wa abnā'a-nā
wa ajdāda-nā
wa jaddāti-nā
wa dunyā-nā
wa ukhrā-nā.

Allāhumma
ka-nā amdaita 'l-laila ta
bi-'s-salāmāti wa 'l-āfiya:
fa-amdi 'alāi-na 'n-nahāra
bi-'s-salāmāti wa 'l-āfiya:
bi-rahmāti-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāhimīn.

Allāhumma Rabba-nā āti-nā
fi 'd-dunyā ḥasanatan
wa fi 'l-ākhirati
ḥasanatan
wa qi-nā
'adhāba 'n-nār:
bi-rahmāti-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāhimīn.

Āmīn Allāhumma
Āmīn yā Allāh
yā Rabba 'l-'Ālamīn.



C.

Another prayer of supplication [*du‘ā*].⁵⁰⁰

Praise be to Allāh,
Who created the heavens
and the earth.⁵⁰¹

There is no god but He.
In Him I have put my trust,
and He is the Lord
of the Mighty Throne.⁵⁰²

Glory be to Him,
and Exalted is He,
far above and beyond
whatever they associate
[with Him].⁵⁰³

O Allāh,
forgive us our sins:
those we have committed openly,
as well as those we have kept secret,
those we have concealed,
as well as those we have made public,
and those
of which You are More Aware
than we ourselves.

O Allāh, grant us Your approval
in this world and the Hereafter,
and let our final outcome
be a state of bliss,
of witnessing and forgiveness.

O Allāh,
let the last part of our lives be good,
and let our endings be good,
and let the best of all our days
be the day when we shall meet You.

*al-ḥamdu li‘llāhi ‘lladhī
khalaqa ‘s-samāwāti
wa ‘l-ard:*

*lā ilāha illā Hū:
‘alai-hi tawakkalt u
wa Huwa Rabbu ‘l-
‘arshi ‘l-‘aẓīm.*

*ṣubḥana-hu
wa ta‘ālā
‘ammā
yushrikūn.*

*Allāhumma ḡhfir
la-nā dhunūba-nā
mā ṣaharnā
wa mā asramā
wa mā akhfainā
wa mā a‘lannā
wa mā
Anta A‘lamu bi-hi
min-nā.*

*Allāhumma a‘ṭi-nā riḍā-ka
fi ‘d-dunyā wa ‘l-ākhirā:
wa ‘khtim la-nā
bi‘s-sa‘ādati
wa ‘sh-shahādati wa ‘l-maghfira.*

*Allāhumma ‘j‘al
ākhirā a‘māri-nā
khairan wa khawātima-nā khairan
wa khaira ayyāmi-nā
yawma nalqā-k.*

⁵⁰⁰ As in the preceding instance, Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may Allāh be well pleased with him) has presented this supplication [*du‘ā*] without introductory comment. In this case, however, we may conclude from the wording of it that it may appropriately be offered after any of the ritual prayers [*ṣalawāt*]. (Allāh knows best!)

⁵⁰¹ This declaration of praise occurs in Q. 6:1.

⁵⁰² This affirmation occurs in Q. 9:129.

⁵⁰³ Q. 10:18, 16:1 and 30:40.

O Allāh, we take refuge with You
from the disappearance
of Your blessing,
from the surprise attack
of Your affliction,
and from the alteration
of Your gracious favor.

O Allāh, we take refuge with You
from the onslaught of misery,
from the trouble of adversity,
from the transformation of prosperity,
and from unfortunate calamity.

We take refuge with You
from all things loathsome and bad,
and we beg You, O Allāh,
to grant us the very best.

O Allāh, we beg You
to remove our sickness,
to heal our illness,
to bestow Your mercy on our dead,
to make our bodies healthy,
and to make them
sincerely devoted to You.

O Allāh,
let our religious convictions
be sincere!

[We beg You]
to preserve our safekeeping,
to expand
[the feeling in] our breasts,⁵⁰⁴
to direct the management
of our affairs,
to put our children
through useful training,
to overlook our misbehavior,
to reinstate us
though we have been absent,
and to confirm our commitment
to our religion.
We beg You for goodness
and right guidance.

O Allāh! Our Lord, we beg You
to give us that which is good
in this world,
and that which is good

Allāhumma innā na'ūdhu bi-ka
min zawāli
ni'mati-ka
wa min faj'ati
niqmati-ka
wa min tahwīli
'āfiyati-k.

Allāhumma innā na'ūdhu bi-ka
min daraki 'sh-shaqā'i
wa jahdi 'l-bālā'i
wa taghyīri 'n-na'mā'i
wa sū'i 'l-qa'dā'.

wa na'ūdhu bi-ka
min jamī'i 'l-makārihi wa 'l-aswā'.
wa nas'alu-ka 'llāhumma
khaira 'l-ātā'i.

Allāhumma innā nas'alu-ka
an takshīfa saqama-nā
wa tubri 'a marāḍa-nā
wa tarḥama mawtā-nā
wa tuṣīḥha abdāna-nā
wa tukhlīṣa-hā
la-k:

Allāhumma
akhlīṣ
adyāna-nā.

wa an taḥfaza 'iyādha-nā
wa tashraḥa
ṣudūra-nā
wa tudabbira
umūra-nā
wa tujabbira
awlāda-nā
wa tastura jurma-nā
wa tarudda
ghiyāba-nā
wa an tuthbita-nā
'alā dīni-nā
wa nas'alu-ka khairan
wa rushdā.

Allāhumma Rabba-nā
innā nas'alu-ka an
tu'tiya-nā ḥasanatan fi 'd-dunyā
wa ḥasanatan

⁵⁰⁴ This is an allusion to Q 20:25–28.

in the Hereafter,
and to let us die as Muslims,
through Your mercy.

Guard us against
the torment of the Fire,
and the torment of the tomb,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!
O Lord of All the Worlds!

*fi 'l-ākhirā:
wa an tatawaffa-nā muslimīn:
bi-rahmati-k:*

*wa qi-nā
'adhāba 'n-nāri
wa 'adhāba 'l-qabr:
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn:
yā Rabba 'l-'ālamīn.*



d.
**Concerning the very great importance
of the prayer of supplication [du‘ā’].**

The offering of the prayer of supplication [du‘ā’] has been commanded, and it is of great importance [bi-makān] in the sight of Allāh, as we have explained many times in the course of this book. It is therefore quite improper for the prayer leader [imām], and for anyone who follows his lead [ma‘mūm], to leave the mosque [masjid] without having offered the prayer of supplication [du‘ā’].

Allāh (Exalted is He) has told us:

So, as soon as you have finished, set to work, and present your request to your Lord. (94:7,8)	<i>fa-idhā faraghta fa-’nṣab wa ilā Rabbi-ka fa-’rghab.</i>
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That is to say: “As soon as you have finished performing the ritual act of worship [‘ibāda], you must set to work on the prayer of supplication [du‘ā’]. You must wish for that which Allāh has at His disposal, and beseech Him to grant it.”

According to the tradition [ḥadīth] that has come down to us on the authority of Anas ibn Malik (may Allāh be well pleased with him), the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace) is reported as having said:

As soon as the prayer leader [imām] is standing at the ready in his niche [miḥrāb], and the ranks [of the congregation] are properly aligned, the merciful blessing [of Allāh] will descend [upon the assembled worshippers]. The first to receive it will be the prayer leader [imām], then the person next to him on his right, then the person next to him on his left. The merciful blessing [raḥma] will then distribute itself throughout the congregation.

An angel will then call out: “So-and-so has gained a benefit, and So-and-so has suffered a loss!” The beneficiary will be anyone who lifts up his hands in offering the supplication [du‘ā’] to Allāh (Exalted is He), as soon he has finished performing his prescribed ritual prayer [ṣalāt maktūba]. The loser will be anyone who leaves the mosque [masjid] without having offered a supplication [du‘ā’]. If someone does leave without having offered a prayer of supplication [du‘ā’], the angels will say: “O So-and-so, how can you manage without Allāh (Exalted is He)? Do you have no need of anything that Allāh has at His disposal?”

2.

The prayer of supplication that should be offered after the recital of the entire Qur'ān [du'ā' khatmat al-Qur'ān].

As for the special prayer of supplication [du'ā'] that should be offered when the recital of the entire Qur'ān [khatmat al-Qur'ān] has been completed, the wording of it is as follows:

Allāh the Almighty has told the truth,	ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l- 'Aẓīmu' lladhī
He who created the Creation,	khalāqa 'l-khalqa
and so originated it;	fa-'btada' a-h:
He who established the [true] religion,	wa sanna 'd-dīna
and laid down its laws; ⁵⁰⁵	wa shara' a-h:
He who caused the light to shine,	wa nawwara 'n-nūra
and made it radiate;	wa sha' sha' a-h:
He who appointed sustenance,	wa qaddara 'r-rizqa
and rendered it amply sufficient;	wa wassa' a-h:
He who inflicted injury	wa darra
on His Creation,	khalqa-hu
and provided it with benefit;	wa nafa' a-h:
He who made the water flow,	wa ajra 'l-mā' a
and caused it to gush forth;	wa anba' a-h:
He who made the heaven	wa ja'ala 's-samā' a
a roof well-kept ⁵⁰⁶	saqfan mahfūẓan
and held aloft,	marfū'an
which He raised up. ⁵⁰⁷	rafa' a-h:
and the earth a carpet ,	wa 'l-arḍa bisātan
which He laid down ⁵⁰⁸	wada' a-h:
He who set the moon in motion,	wa sayyara 'l-qamara
and caused it to rise and shine.	wa aṭla' a-h.
Glory be to Him!	subhāna-hu
How exalted is His status,	mā 'lā makāna-hu
and how elevated!	wa arfa' a-h:

⁵⁰⁵ This is an allusion to Q. 42:13.

⁵⁰⁶ This is an allusion to Q. 21:32

⁵⁰⁷ This is an allusion to Q. 52:5

⁵⁰⁸ This is a paraphrase of Q. 71:19.

How splendid is His sovereignty,
and how unique!
None can undo what He has made,
and none can alter
what He has created.
None can humiliate those
whom He has raised in dignity,
and none can dignify those
whom He has reduced to degradation.
None can separate that
which He has joined together.
No partner has He,
and there is no god besides Him.

Allāh has told the truth, He who
has prearranged the pattern
of the ages,
and predetermined
the course of destiny,
and settled the conduct of all affairs;
and the alternation of
[daylight and] the dark;
He who facilitates
that which is difficult,
and makes even easier
that which is easy;
He who has tamed the raging sea;⁵⁰⁹
He who sent down the Criterion
and the Light,⁵¹⁰
and the Torah and the Gospel⁵¹¹
and the Psalms;⁵¹²
He who has sworn
by the Criterion⁵¹³
and the Mount,
and the Book inscribed
on the parchment unrolled,
and the House frequented,⁵¹⁴

wa a'azza sulṭāna-hu
wa abda'a-h:
lā rādda li-mā ṣana'a-h:
wa lā mughayyira
li-ma 'khtara'a-h:
wa lā mudhilla
li-man raḥa'a-h:
wa lā mu'izza
li-man waḍa'a-h:
wa lā muḥarriqa
li-mā jama'a-h:
wa lā sharīka la-h:
wa lā ilāha ma'a-h.

ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'lladhī
dabbara 'd-
duhūr:
wa qaddara 'l-
maqḍūr:
wa ṣarraḥa 'l-umūr:
wa ta'āquba 'd-
daijūr:
wa sahhala 'l-
ma'sūr:
wa yassara 'l-
maīsūr:
wa sakhkhara 'l-baḥra 'l-masjūr:
wa anzala 'l-Furqāna
wa 'n-Nūr:
wa 't-Tawrāta wa 'l-Injīla
wa 'z-Zabūr:
wa aqsama
bi'l-Furqāni
wa 't-Ṭūr:
wa 'l-Kitābi 'l-masṭūr:
fi 'r-raqqi 'l-manshūr:
wa 'l-Baiti 'l-ma'mūr:

⁵⁰⁹ This is an allusion to Q. 52:6.

⁵¹⁰ The Qur'ānic verses [āyāt] alluded to here include Q. 5:15, 21:48, 25:1 and 64:8.

⁵¹¹ Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has mentioned His sending down of the Torah [*at-Tawrāh*] and the Gospel [*al-Injīl*] in several verses [āyāt] of the Qur'ān, including 3:1–4, in which He also mentions the Criterion [*al-Furqān*].

⁵¹² Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) has mentioned the Psalms [*Zabūr*] in three verses [āyāt] of the Qur'ān: 4:163, 17:55 and 21:105.

⁵¹³ In uttering the words:

Qāf. By the glorious Qur'ān. (50:1)

Qāf: wa 'l-Qur'āni 'l-majīd.

—Allāh (Exalted is He) is implicitly swearing by the Criterion [*Furqān*], which He uses as another name for the Qur'ān in several verses [āyāt] of His Book, notably 2:185 and 25:1.

⁵¹⁴ These four lines constitute a slightly paraphrased version of the first four verses [āyāt] of the Sūra of the Mount [*Sūrat at-Ṭūr*] (Q. 52:1–4).

and the Raising and the Resurrection;
He who is the Creator of darkness
and light,
and of children,
and of the heavenly brides,⁵¹⁵
and of the Gardens and palaces
[of Paradise].

Allāh causes whom He will to hear.
You cannot make yourself heard
by those who are in the graves.
(35:22)

Allāh the Almighty has told the truth,
He who is Omnipotent,
and therefore reigns Supreme,
and is so Exalted
that He cannot be surmounted;
He before whose Might and Majesty
all things are humbly submissive
and subdued;
He who lifted up the sky
and raised it aloft,⁵¹⁶
and laid out the earth
and spread it wide;⁵¹⁷
He who made the rivers gush forth,
and so caused them to flow;⁵¹⁸
He who partitioned
the seas and oceans,⁵¹⁹
and so made them become full;
He who tamed the stars,
and so caused them to rise and shine;
He who sent forth the clouds,
so that they rose high in the sky;
He who brightened the light,
so that it shone;
He who sent down the rain,
so that it fell;
He who spoke to Moses,
and so let him hear;
He who revealed Himself
to the mountain,
so that it was shattered to pieces;⁵²⁰

wa 'l-ba'thi wa 'n-nushūr:
wa Jā'ilu 'z-zulumāti
wa 'n-nūr:
wa 'l-wuldāni
wa 'l-ḥūr:
wa 'l-jimāni wa 'l-quṣūr.

inna 'llāha yusmī' u man yashā':
wa mā anta bi-musm'in
man fi 'l-qubūr.

ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-'Aẓīmu
'lladhī
'azza fa-'rtafa':
wa 'alā
fa-'mtana':
wa dhalla kullu shai'in
li-'azamati-hi
wa khaḍa':
wa samaka 's-samā'a
wa rafa':
wa farasha 'l-arḍa
wa awsa':
wa fajjara 'l-anhāra
fa-anba':
wa maraja
'l-biḥāra
fa-atra':
wa sakhkhara 'n-nujūma
fa-aṭla':
wa arsala 's-sahāba
fa-'rtafa':
wa nawwara 'n-nūra
fa-lama':
wa anzala 'l-ghaiṭha
fa-hama':
wa kallama Mūsā
fa-asma':
wa tajallā
li'l-jabala
fa-taqatta':

⁵¹⁵ See note 9 on p. 9 above.

⁵¹⁶ This is an allusion to Q. 79:27,28.

⁵¹⁷ This is an allusion to Q. 51:48.

⁵¹⁸ This is an allusion to Q. 18:33.

⁵¹⁹ This is an allusion to Q. 25:53 and 55:20,21.

⁵²⁰ The story of Moses (peace be upon him) and the mountain is told by Allāh (Exalted is He) in Q. 7:143.

He who has given and taken away;
 He who has inflicted injury
 and provided benefit;
 He who has bestowed and withheld;
 He who has established the practices
 and laid down the laws
 [of religion];
 He who has set apart
 and joined together;
 He who has brought you all into being
 from a single soul,
 so that [here you have] a lodging-place
 and a repository.⁵²¹

Allāh has told the truth,
 the Almighty, the Ever-Relenting,
 the All-Forgiving, the Ever-Giving;
 He before whose Might and Majesty
 all necks are humbly bowed;
 He to whose All-Compelling Power
 the obstinate meekly submit;
 He toward whom
 the stubbornly unyielding
 soften and relax;
 He in whose work
 intelligent minds find
 evidence that leads to understanding;
 He whose praise
 is extolled by the thunder
 and the clouds,
 by the lightning and the mirage,
 and by the trees and the animals;
 He who is the Lord of lords;
 the Originator of all secondary causes,
 the Revealer of the Book;
 the Creator of His creation
 from the dust;
 the Forgiver of sin;
 the Acceptor of repentance;
 the Stern in punishment.

There is no god but He.
 In Him I have put my trust,
 and unto Him I turn. (13:30)

Allāh has told the truth, He who is
 always Majestic,
 always a Source of Guidance.
 The truth He has told,

wa wahaba wa-naza':
wa darra
wa-nafa':
wa a'tā wa mana':
wa sanna
wa shara':

wa farraqa
wa jama':
wa ansha' a-kum
min nafsīn wāḥida:
fa-mustaqarrun
wa mustawda'.

ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-
'Azīmu 't-Tawwāb:
al-Ghafūru 'l-Wahhāb:
alladhī khaḍa'at
li-'azamati-hi 'r-riqāb:
wa dhallat
li-jabarūti-hi 'ṣ-ṣi'āb:
wa lānat
la-hu 'sh-shidādu 'ṣ-
ṣilāb:
wa 'stadallat
bi-ṣan'ati-hi 'l-
albāb:
wa yusabbiḥu
bi-ḥamdi-hi 'r-ra'du
wa 's-sahāb:
wa 'l-barqu wa 's-sarāb:
wa 'sh-shajaru wa 'd-dawābb:
Rabbu 'l-arbāb:
wa Musabbibu 'l-asbāb:
wa Munazzilu 'l-Kitāb:
Khāliqū khalqī-hi :
mina 't-turāb
Ghāfiru 'dh-dhanb:
wa Qābilu 't-tawb:
Shadīdu 'l-'iqāb:

lā ilāha illā Hū:
'alai-hi tawakkaltu
wa ilai-hi matāb.

ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'lladhī
lam yazal Jalīlan
Dalīlā:
ṣadaqa

⁵²¹ These four lines constitute a partial and slightly paraphrased quotation of Q. 6:99.

He who is all I need
in the way of a Guarantor.⁵²²

The truth He has told,
He whom I have
singled out as a Trustee.⁵²³

Allāh, the Guide who shows a way
to reach Him, has told the truth.

Allāh has told the truth,
and who is more truthful
than He in telling?⁵²⁴

Allāh has told the truth,
and His communications
have conveyed the truth,
and His Prophets have told the truth.
Allāh has told the truth,
and His blessings
have been made manifest.
Allāh has told the truth,
and His earth and His heaven
have also told the truth.

Allāh has told the truth,
[Allāh] the Unique,
the Eternally Pre-existent,
the Noble, the All-Generous,
the Ever-Present Witness,
the All-Knowing,
the All-Forgiving,
the All-Compassionate,
the Ever-Appreciative,
the All-Forbearing.

Say: "Allāh has told the truth;
so follow the creed of Abraham."
(3:95)

Allāh has told the truth,
[Allāh] the Almighty—
there is no god but He—
the All-Merciful,
the All-Compassionate
the Ever-Living, the All-Knowing,
the Ever-Living, the All-Generous,

man ḥasbī
bi-hi Kafīlā:
ṣadaqa mani
'ttakhadhtu-hu
Wakīlā:
ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-Hādī ilai-hi
sabilā:
ṣadaqa 'llāhu
wa man aṣdaqu
min-hu qīlā.

ṣadaqa 'llāhu
wa ṣadaqa
anbā' u-h:
wa ṣadaqat anbiyā' u-h:
ṣadaqa 'llāhu
wa jalat
ālā' u-h:
ṣadaqa 'llāhu
wa ṣadaqat arḍu-hu
samā' u-h:

ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-
Wāhidu 'l-
Qadīm:
al-Mājīdu 'l-Karīm:
ash-Shāhidu 'l-
'Alīm:
al-Ghafūru 'r-
Raḥīm:
ash-Shakūru 'l-
Ḥalīm:

qul ṣadaqa 'llāh:
fa-'ttabī'ū millata Ibrāhīm.

ṣadaqa 'llāhu 'l-
'Aẓīmu 'lladhī
lā ilāha illā Hū:
ar-Raḥmānu 'r-
Raḥīm:
al-Ḥayyu 'l-Alīm:
al-Ḥayyu 'l-Karīm:

⁵²² This is an allusion to Q. 16:91.

⁵²³ As Allāh Himself (Almighty and Glorious is He) has assured us in a verse [āya] of the Qur'ān:
And Allāh is sufficient as Trustee. (4:81)

wa kafā bi'llāhi Wakīlā.

⁵²⁴ These words echo the question posed at the end of the verse [āya] of the Qur'ān:
and who is more truthful
than Allāh in telling? (4:122)

wa man aṣdaqu
mina 'llāhi qīlā.

the Ever-Living, the Everlasting,
He who will never die.

The Lord of Majesty and Honor,
and of the Splendid Names,
and of the Prodigious Blessings.

The noble Messengers
have also been sent
with the truth.

May Allāh bless our Chief,
Muḥammad, and give him peace,
and peace be upon them all!

And we, with respect to what Allāh,
our Lord,
and [Muḥammad] our Chief
and our Master,
have said, we are among
the witnesses;
and whatever duties
they have enjoined
and have made incumbent
[upon us], we do not deny
[our obligation to fulfill them].

And praise be to Allāh,
the Lord of All the Worlds,
and His blessings be upon our Chief,
Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets,
and upon his venerated forefathers,
Adam, our Chieftain, and
Abraham, the Bosom Friend
[of Allāh],

and upon all his brethren
meaning his fellow Prophets,
and upon the pure members
of his household,
and upon his chosen Companions,
and upon his pure wives,
the Mothers of the Believers,
and upon those
who follow their example
in active goodness
until the Day of Judgment,
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

Allāh has told the truth, He who is
the Lord of Majesty and Honor,

*al-Ḥayyu 'l-Bāqī:
lā yamūtu abadā.*

*Dhu'l-jalāli wa 'l-ikrām:
wa 'l-asmā' i 'l-'iẓām:
wa 'l-minan al-jisām:*

*wa bullighati 'r-rusulu 'l-
kivām:
bi'l-ḥaqq:
ṣalla 'llāhu 'alā sayyidi-nā
Muḥammadin wa sallam:
wa 'alai-himi 's-salām.*

*wa nahnu 'alā mā qāla 'llāhu
Rabbu-nā
wa Sayyidu-nā
wa Mawlā-nā
mina 'sh-
shāhidīn:
wa mā
awjaba
wa alẓama
ghairu jāhidīn:*

*wa 'l-ḥamdu li' llāhi
Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn:
wa ṣalawātu-hu 'alā sayyidi-nā
Muḥammadin khātami 'n-nabiyyīn:
wa 'alā abawai-hi 'l-mukarramaini
sayyidi-nā Ādama
wa 'l-Khalīli Ibrāhīm:*

*wa 'alā jamī' i ikhwāni-hi
mina 'n-nabiyyīn:
wa 'alā ahli
baiti-hi 't-tāhirīn:
wa 'alā aṣḥābi-hi 'l-muntakhabīn:
wa 'alā azwāji-hi 't-tāhirāti
ummahāti 'l-mu' minīn:
wa 'ala 't-
tābi' ma la-hum
bi-iḥsānin
ilā yawmi 'd-dīn:
'alai-nā ma'a-hum bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*

*ṣadaqa 'llāhu
Dhu'l-jalāli wa 'l-ikrām:*

of Splendid Might
and Sovereign Power;
He who is All-Compelling,
and cannot be repulsed;
He who is Omnipotent,
and cannot be deterred;
He who is Eternally Self-Sustaining,
and never sleeps.
His are the noble acts,
and the splendid gifts,
and the enormous benefits,
and the gracious favors and blessings,
and perfection and completeness.
The noble angels
proclaim His glory,
as do the animals and the reptiles,
and the winds and the clouds,
and the light and the darkness.
He is Allāh, the King,
the Holy One,
the Source of Peace.⁵²⁵

And we bear witness
to that which Allāh,
our Lord, has said.
(Glorious be His praise,
and sanctified be His Names.)
His blessings have become manifest,
and His earth and His heaven
have also borne witness,
and His Messengers
have pronounced it,
and His Prophets
have been witnesses.

Allāh bears witness that
there is no god but He—and [so do]
the angels and the men of learning—
upholding justice.
There is no god but He,
the Omnipotent, the All-Wise.
(3:18)

The true religion
in the sight of Allāh is surrender
[to His will and guidance]. (3:19)

And as for us, to that which Allāh,
our Lord, has testified,

wa 'l-ʿazamati
wa 's-sultān:
Jabbārūn
lā yurām:
ʿAzīzun
lā yudām:
Qayyūmun
lā yanām:
la-hu 'l-afʿālu 'l-kirām:
wa 'l-mawāhibu 'l-izām:
wa 'l-ayādi 'l-jisām:
wa 'l-afḍālu wa 'l-anʿām:
wa 'l-kamālu wa 't-tamām:
tusabbihū la-hu 'l-malā'ikatu 'l-
kirām:
wa 'l-bahā'imu wa 'l-hawāmm:
wa 'r-riyāhu wa 'l-ghamām:
wa 'd-dīyā' u wa 'z-zalām:
wa Huwa 'llāhu 'l-Maliku 'l-
Quddūsu 's-
Salām.

wa nahnu ʿalā
mā qāla 'llāhu
Rabbu-nā
jalla thanā' u-h:
wa taqaddasat asmā' u-h:
wa jalat ālā' u-h:
wa shahidat arḍu-hu
wa samā' u-h:
wa nataqat
bi-hi rusulu-hu
wa anbiyā' u-hu
shāhidūn:

shahida 'llāhu anna-hu
lā ilāha illā Huwa
wa 'l-malā'ikatu wa ulu 'l-ʿilmi
qā'imān bi'l-qisṭ:
lā ilāha illā Huwa 'l-
ʿAzīzu 'l-Ḥakīm.

inna' d-dīna
ʿinda 'llāhi 'l-Islām.

wa nahnu bi-mā shahida 'llāhu
Rabbu-nā

⁵²⁵ This is a partial quotation of Q. 59:23.

as have the angels
and the men of learning
among His creatures,
we too are among those
who bear witness.

This is a testimony
by which one bears witness
to the Omnipotent,
the Praiseworthy,
and by which the believer
professes obedience
to the All-Forgiving,
the Ever-Loving,⁵²⁶
and he dedicates the testimony
to the Lord of the Throne,
the All-Glorious,⁵²⁷
who will honor it with acceptance,
as He accepts righteous
and rightly guided work.⁵²⁸

To one who utters it
eternal life will be granted,
in Gardens
endowed with thornless lote-trees,
and clustered acacias,
and spreading shade,
and gushing water.⁵²⁹
Therein he will keep company
with the witness-bearing Prophets,
and those who bow
and prostrate themselves,
and those who exert the utmost effort
in paying obedience to Him.

O Allāh, grant that we may be
truthful in this affirmation
of the truth,
and witnesses to this truthfulness,
and faithful believers
in this testimony,
and professors of Unity in this faith,
and sincere
in this profession of Unity,
and certain in this sincerity,

*wa 'l-malā'ikatu
wa ulu 'l-'ilmi
min khalqī-hi
mīna 'sh-
shāhidīn:*

*shahādātum
shahida
bi-ha 'l-'Azīza 'l-
Ḥamīd:
wa dāna
bi-ha 'l-mu'mīnu 'l-
Ghafūra 'l-
Wadūd:
wa akhlāṣa bi'sh-shahādati
li-Dhi 'l-'arshī 'l-
Majīd:
yarfa' u-hā
bi'l-'amali 'ṣ-ṣālihi 'r-
rashīd:*

*yu' tā qā'ilu-ha 'l-
khulūd:
fi jannati
dhāti sidrin makhḍūd:
wa ṭalḥin manḍūd:
wa zillin mamḍūd:
wa mā'in maskūb:
yurāfiqū
fi-ha 'n-nabiyyīna 'sh-shuhūd:
wa 'r-rukka 'u 's-
sujūd:
wa 'l-bādhilma fi tā'ati-hi
ghāyata 'l-majhūd.*

*Allāhumma 'j'al-nā
bi-hādha 't-taṣḍīqi
ṣādiqīn:
wa bi-hādha 'ṣ-ṣidqi shāhidīn:
wa bi-hādhihi 'sh-shahādati
mu'mīnīn:
wa bi-hādha 'l-īmāni muwāḥḥidīn:
wa bi-hādha 't-
tawḥīdi mukhlīṣīn:
wa bi-hādha 'l-ikhḷāṣi mūqīnīn:*

⁵²⁶ Allāh (Exalted is He) has so described Himself in Q. 85:14.

⁵²⁷ Allāh (Exalted is He) has so described Himself in Q. 85:15.

⁵²⁸ This is an allusion to Q. 35:10.

⁵²⁹ This sentence includes a partial quotation of Q. 56:27–33.

and consciously aware
of this certitude,
and ready to acknowledge
this awareness,
and penitent
through this acknowledgment,
and successful
because of this repentance.

May we be eager
for that which is close to You,
and seekers
of that which is in Your presence.

May You justly vaunt our worth
to the noble
recording angels.⁵³⁰

Resurrect us in the company of
the Prophets
and the champions of truth,
and the martyrs
and the righteous.⁵³¹

Let us not be included
among those
whom the devils seduce,
distracting them
from their religious duty,
so that they come to be
among the remorseful,
and in the Hereafter
among the losers.

Grant us eternal life
in the Gardens of bliss,
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, to You be the praise,
for Worthy of praise are You,
and You are the One
who is truly Deserving
of gracious recognition
and more credit yet.
To You be the praise
for the uninterrupted flow
of Your beneficence.
To You be the praise
for the endless recurrence

wa bi-hādha 'l-
īqāni 'ārifīn:
wa bi-hādhi 'l-
ma'rifā mu'tarīfīn:
wa bi-hādha 'l-
i'tirāfi munībīn:
wa bi-hādhihi 'l-
ināba fā'izīn:

wa fi-mā
ladai-ka rāghibīn:
wa li-mā
'inda-ka ṭalībīn:

wa bāhi
bi-na 'l-malā'ikata 'l-
kirāma 'l-kātibīn:

wa 'hshir-nā
ma'a 'n-nabiyyīna
wa 'ṣ-ṣiddīqīn:
wa 'sh-shuhadā' i 'ṣ-
ṣāliḥīn:

wa lā taj'al-nā
mim-mani
'stahwat-hu 'sh-shayātīn:
fa-shaghalat-hu
'ani 'd-dīn:
fa-aṣbaḥa
mina 'n-nādīmīn:
wa fi 'l-ākhirati
mina 'l-khāsirīn:

wa awjib la-na 'l-khulūda
fi jannāti 'n-na'im:
bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma la-ka 'l-ḥamd:
wa Anta li'l-ḥamdi Ahl:
wa Anta 'l-
Ḥaqqīqu
bi'l-minnati
thumma 'l-faḍl:
la-ka 'l-ḥamdu
'alā tatābu'i
ihsāni-k:
wa la-ka 'l-ḥamdu
'alā tawāturi

⁵³⁰ This is an allusion to Q. 82:10–12.

⁵³¹ This is an allusion to Q. 4:69.

of Your benefaction.
 To You be the praise
 for the constant stream
 of Your benevolence.

O Allāh,
 You instilled affection for us in the
 hearts of our fathers and mothers,
 when we were little children,
 and You have multiplied
 Your favors to us,
 since we became adults.
 You have conferred
 Your kindness upon us
 in copious abundance.
 You have not been quick
 to punish us,
 although we have often
 acted foolishly.
 To You the praise is therefore due,
 O Allāh,
 so we praise You in private
 and in public too,
 and we thank You lovingly
 and of our own free will.
 Of course the praise is due to You,
 since You inspired us
 to request forgiveness for our sin.

To You belongs the praise,
 so bestow upon us a Garden
 [of Paradise]
 and screen from us a Fire [of Hell].
 Do not destroy us
 on the Day of Resurrection,
 thereby putting us to shame
 among the folk assembled.
 Do not disgrace us
 by exposing our bad deeds,
 on the Day of our meeting with You,
 thereby leaving us nothing to wear
 but degradation and dejection.
 [Grant these requests]
 through Your Mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!
 O Allāh, to You be the praise,
 as You have guided us unto Islām,
 and given us wisdom
 and the Qurʾān.

in ʿāmi-k:
 wa la-ka ʿl-ḥamdu
 ʿalā tarādūfi
 ʿmtināni-k.

Allāhumma
 inna-ka ʿatṭafta ʿalai-nā
 qulūba ʿl-ʿabāʾi wa ʿl-ummahāti
 ṣighārā:
 wa dāʿafta
 ʿalai-nā niʿama-ka
 kibārā:
 wa wālaita
 ilai-nā birra-ka
 midrārā:
 wa jahilnā
 wa mā
 ʿājalta-nā
 mirārā:
 fa-la-ka ʿl-ḥamdu
 ʿllāhumma:
 fa-innā nahmidu-ka
 sirran wa jihārā:
 wa nashkuru-ka maḥabbatan
 wa ʿkhtiyārā:
 fa-la-ka ʿl-ḥamdu
 idh alhamta-nā
 minā ʿl-khaṭaʾi ʿstighfārā:
 wa la-ka ʿl-ḥamdu
 fa-ʿrzuq-nā jannatan

wa ʿhjub ʿan-nā nārā:
 wa lā tuḥlik-nā
 yawma ʿl-baʿthi
 fa-tajʿal-nā
 baīma ʿl-maʿāshiri ʿārā:
 wa lā tafḍaḥ-nā
 bi-sūʾi afʿāli-nā
 yawma liqāʾi-ka
 fa-taksu-nā
 dhillatan wa ʿnkisārā:

bi-rahmati-ka
 yā Arḥama ʿr-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma la-ka ʿl-ḥamd:
 ka-mā hadaita-nā liʿl-Islām:
 wa aʿṭaita-na ʿl-ḥikmata
 wa ʿl-Qurʾān:

O Allāh, You taught us [the Qurʾān]
before we felt any interest
in its teaching.
You bestowed its grace upon us,
before we learned
how to understand it,
and You singled us out to receive it,
before we had any understanding
of its merit.

O Allāh, since this has been
a kindness to us,
from Your bountiful grace,
and a favor conferred upon us,
without scheming or effort
on our part,
grant us now, O Allāh,
the proper observance of its Truth,⁵³²
and the preservation of its Verses,
and conduct in accordance with
its unequivocal precepts,
and faith in its ambiguous passages,
and right guidance in the
contemplation of its meaning,⁵³³
and reflection on its parables
and its miraculous character,
and insight
into its illumination
and its legislation.
Let us not be assailed by doubts
concerning its credibility,
and let no deviation
cause us to waver
in the pursuit of its path.

O Allāh, enable us to benefit
by the Mighty Qurʾān,
and let us find blessings in the signs
and the wise remembrance
[it contains].⁵³⁴
Accept [our supplication] from us,
for You are indeed
the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing,
and relent toward us,

Allāhumma Anta ʿallamta-nā
qabla raghbati-nā
fi taʿlīmi-h:
wa mananta bi-hi ʿalai-nā
qabla ʿalimnā
bi-maʿrifati-h:
wa khaṣṣṭa-nā bi-hi
qabla maʿrifati-nā
bi-faḍli-h.

Allāhumma fa-idhā kāna dhālika
min faḍli-ka
luṭfan bi-nā
anywa ʿmtinānan ʿalai-nā min ghairi
hīlati-nā
wa lā quwwati-nā:
fa-hab la-nā ʿllāhumma
riʿāyata ḥaqqi-h:
wa ḥifza āyāti-h:
wa ʿamalan
bi-muḥkami-h:
wa imānan bi-mutashābih-h:
wa hudan
fi tadabburi-h:
wa tafakkuran fi amthāli-hi
wa muʿjizati-h:
wa tabṣīratan
fi nūri-hi
wa ḥukmi-h:
lā tuʿarīḍ-na ʿsh-shukūku
fi taṣḍīqi-h:
wa lā yakhtalij-na ʿz-
zaighu
fi qaṣdi ṭarīqi-h.

Allāhumma ʿnfaʿ-
bi-ʿl-Qurʾāni ʿl-ʿaẓīm:
wa bārik la-nā fi ʿl-āyāti
wa ʿdh-dhikri ʿl-ḥakīm:

wa taqabbal min-nā
inna-ka
Anta ʿs-Samīʿu ʿl-ʿAlīm:
wa tub ʿalai-nā

⁵³² This phrase alludes to an expression used by Allāh (Almighty and Glorious is He) in Q. 57:27.

⁵³³ This is an allusion to Q. 4:82 and 23:68.

⁵³⁴ This is an allusion to Q. 3:58.

for You are indeed
the Ever-Relenting,
the All-Compassionate.
[Grant our requests]
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, let the Qurʾān be
the springtime of our hearts,
and the healing of our breasts,
and the removal of our sorrows,
and the departure of our worries
and our anxieties.
[Let it be] our driver and our leader,
and our guide
to You and to Your Gardens
the Gardens of bliss,
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, let the Qurʾān be
for our hearts an illumination,
for our eyes a clarification,
for our sicknesses a medication,
for our sins a purification,
and from the Fire [of Hell]
a means of salvation.

O Allāh,
cause it to dress us in fine clothes,
and to settle us on couches
in the shade.
Use it in order to shower
blessings upon us,
and to drive misfortunes
away from us.
Let it enable us,
when recompense is due,
to be among those
who are successful;
when gracious favor is bestowed,
to be among those who are grateful;
and in the face of trial
and tribulation,
to be among those
who patiently endure.
Let us not be included among
those whom the devils seduce,
by using this world to tempt them

inna-ka
Anta 't-Tawwābu 'r-
Rahīm:

bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma 'j'ali 'l-Qur'āna
rabi'a qulūbi-nā:
wa shifā'a sudūri-nā:
wa jilā'a aḥzāni-nā:
wa dhahāba humūmi-nā
wa ghumūmi-nā:
wa sā'iqā-nā wa qā'ida-nā
wa dalīla-nā
ilai-ka wa ilā jannāti-ka
jannāti 'n-na'im:
bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma 'j'ali 'l-Qur'āna
li-qulūbi-nā diyā':
wa li-abṣāri-nā jilā':
wa li-asqāmi-nā dawā':
wa li-dhunūbi-nā mumahḥṣiṣā:
wa mina 'n-nāri
mukhalliṣā.

Allāhumma 'ksu-nā
bi-hi 'l-ḥulal:
wa askin-nā
bi-hi 'ṣ-ṣulal:
wa asbigh 'alai-nā
bi-hi 'n-ni'am:
wa 'dfa' bi-hi
'an-na 'n-niqam:
wa 'j'al-nā
bi-hi 'inda 'l-jazā'i
mina 'l-
fā'izīn:
wa 'inda 'n-na'mā'i
mina 'sh-shākirīn:
wa 'inda 'l-
balā'i
mina 'ṣ-
ṣābirīn:
wa lā taj'al-nā
mim-mani 'stahwat-hu 'sh-shayāṭīn:
fa-shaghalat-hu bi 'd-dunyā

away from religious duty,
 so that they come to be
 among the losers.
 [Grant our requests]
 through Your Mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!
 O Allāh, do not let
 the Qurʾān be unfruitful,
 and do not let the road
 lead us nowhere.
 Do not cause our Prophet, our Chief
 and our Mainstay, Muḥammad,
 (Allāh bless him and give him peace)
 to disown us at the Resurrection,
 and let him not turn
 his back upon us.
 Let him rather be,
 O our Lord and our Creator,
 O our Sustainer,
 an intercessor who has been
 empowered to intercede on our behalf.
 Bring us to his Basin, and use his cup
 to offer us a drink
 that is so thirst-quenching,
 so palatable and salubrious,
 that we shall never
 be thirsty again after having drunk it.⁵³⁵
 Let us be neither shameful
 nor disloyal,
 not guilty of denial
 not having earned Your wrath,
 and not having gone astray.⁵³⁶
 [Grant our requests]
 through Your Mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!
 O Allāh, enable us to benefit
 by the Qurʾān,
 the status of which
 You have exalted,
 the principles of which
 You have established,
 the authority of which
 You have confirmed,
 the blessings of which
 You have explained,

ʿani ʾd-dīn:
 fa-aṣbaḥa
 mina ʾl-khāsirīn:
 bi-rahmati-ka
 yā Arḥama ʾr-rāḥimīn.
 Allāhumma lā tajʿali ʾl-
 Qurʾāna māḥilā:
 wa la ʾs-ṣirāta
 bi-nā zāʾilā:
 wa lā nabīyya-nā wa sayyida-nā
 wa sanada-nā Muḥammadan
 (ṣalla ʾllāhu ʿalai-hi wa sallam)
 fi ʾl-qiyāmati ʿan-nā
 muʾridan
 wa lā muwalliyā:
 ijʿal-hu
 yā Rabba-nā Khāliqa-nā
 yā Rāziqa-nā
 la-nā shāfiʾan
 mushaffāʾa:
 wa awrid-nā ḥawḍa-hu wa ʾsqi-nā
 bi-kaʾsi-hi
 mashraban rawīyyā:
 sāʾighan
 haniyyā:
 lā naẓma ʾu baʿda-hu abadā:
 ghaira khazāyā
 wa lā nākithīn:
 wa lā jāhidīn:
 wa lā maghḍūbin ʿalai-nā
 wa lā ḍāllīn:
 bi-rahmati-ka
 yā Arḥama ʾr-rāḥimīn.
 Allāhumma ʾnfaʿ-
 biʾl-Qurʾāni ʾlladhī
 rafaʾta
 makāna-h:
 wa thabatta
 arkāna-h:
 wa ayyadta
 sulṭāna-h:
 wa bayyanta
 barakāta-hu

⁵³⁵ See Vol.1, pp. 237–38.

⁵³⁶ This is an allusion to the words of Allāh (Exalted is He) in the Opening Sūra [Sūrat al-Fātiḥa] of the Qurʾān.

the language of which
 You have caused to be
 the eloquent Arabic tongue,⁵³⁷
 and [concerning which]
 You have said,
 O Most Excellent of sayers
 (Glory be to Him):

So, when We recite it,
 follow its recitation.
 Then upon Us
 rests the task of explaining it.
 (75:18,19)

It is the best
 of Your Books in arrangement,
 the most lucid of them in speech,
 and the clearest of them in stating
 what is lawful and unlawful.
 It is precise in explanation,
 manifest in demonstration,
 securely protected from excess
 and insufficiency.

In it there is a promise and a threat,⁵³⁸
 an intimidation and a menace.

Falsehood cannot come at it
 from before it or behind it.
 [It is] a revelation
 from One who is All-Wise,
 All-Praiseworthy. (41:42)

O Allāh, oblige us therefore
 to hold it in even greater honor.
 Enroll us in
 every auspicious act of piety,
 and keep us employed
 in righteous and rightly guided work.
 You are indeed the Ever-Near,
 the Responsive.
 [Grant our requests]
 through Your Mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, as You have caused us to be
 believers in it [the Qur'ān],
 and verifiers
 of that which it contains,

wa ja'alta'l-lughata 'l-
 'arabiyyata 'l-
 faṣīhata lisāna-h:
 wa
 qulta
 yā 'azza
 min qā'ilin subhāna-h:

fa-idhā qara' nāhu
 fa-'ttabi' qur'ānah:
 thumma inna
 'alai-nā bayāna-h.

wa huwa aḥsanu
 Kutubi-ka niẓāmā:
 wa awḍaḥu-hā kalāmā:
 wa abyānu-hā
 ḥalālan wa ḥarāmā:
 muḥkamu 'l-bayān:
 zāhiru 'l-burhān:
 mahrūsun minā 'z-ziyādati
 wa 'n-nuqṣān:

fī-hi wa'dun wa wa'id:
 wa takhwīfun wa taḥdīd:

lā ya'tī-hi 'l-bāṭilu min
 baimi yadai-hi wa lā min khalfi-h:
 tanzīlun
 min Ḥakīmīn
 Ḥamīd.

Allāhumma fa-awjib la-nā
 bi-hi 'sh-sharafa 'l-mazīd:
 wa alḥiq-nā
 bi-kulli birrin sa'id:
 wa 'sta'mil-nā
 fī 'l-'amali 'ṣ-ṣālihi 'r-rashīd:
 inna-ka Anta 'l-Qarībū 'l-
 Mujīb:

bi-rahmati-ka
 yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma fa-ka-mā ja'alta-nā
 bi-hi muṣaddiqīn:
 wa li-mā
 fī-hi muḥaqqiqīn:

⁵³⁷ Allāh (Exalted is He) has stated this emphatically in Q. 26:192-195.

⁵³⁸ That is to say, the promise of blissful reward in the Garden of Paradise, and the threat of terrible torment in the Fire of Hell.

let us also be beneficiaries
of its recitation,
attentive to the sweet delight
of its oration,
ready to take instruction
from its contents,
compilers of its rules and regulations,
obedient to its commandments
and its prohibitions.
Let us be, at its conclusion,
among those
who are triumphantly successful.
Let us be recipients
of its spiritual reward,
remembering You
in all that we experience,
and pinning our hopes
on You in all our affairs.
And grant forgiveness to us
on this night of ours—to all of us—
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, cause us to be included
among those
who have preserved for the Qurʾān
its sanctity,
whenever they have held it
in their keeping,
and have glorified its dignity,
whenever they have listened to it,
and have behaved
with due propriety,
whenever they have been
in its presence,
and have abided by its ordinance,
whenever they have been
apart from it,
and have beautified its surroundings,
whenever they have been
in its vicinity,
and have dedicated its recitation
to Your Noble Countenance
and the abode of the Hereafter,
and have thus attained,
through its agency,
to the splendidly honorable
spiritual stations.

fa-ʾjʿal-nā bi-tilāwati-hi
muntafīʾin:
wa ilā ladhīdhi
khiṭābi-hi mustamiʾin:
wa bi-mā
fi-hi muʿtabirīn:
wa li-ahkāmī-hi jāmiʾin:
wa li-awāmīri-hi
wa nawāhi-hi khāḍīʾin:
wa ʾinda
khatmi-hi
mina ʾl-fāʾizīn:
wa li-thawābi-hi
ḥāʾizīn:
wa la-ka fi jāmiʾi
shuhūdi-nā dhākīrīn:
wa ilai-ka fi jāmiʾi
umūri-nā rājiʾin:
wa ʾghfir la-nā
fi lailati-nā ḥādhihi ajmaʾin:
bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama ʾr-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma ʾjʿal-nā
mina ʾlladhīna
ḥafizū liʾl-Qurʾāni
ḥurmata-hu
lammā
ḥafizū-h:
wa ʾazzamū manzilata-hu
lammā samiʾū-h:
wa taʾaddabū
bi-ādābi-hi
lammā
ḥadarū-h:
wa ʾltazamū ḥukma-hu
lammā
fāraqū-h:
wa aḥsanū jiwāra-hu
lammā
jāwarū-h:
wa arādū bi-tilāwati-hi
Wajha-ka ʾl-Karīm:
wa dāra ʾl-ākhirā:
fa-waṣalū
bi-hi
ila ʾl-maqāmāti ʾl-
fākhira:

Cause each of us, through its agency,
to be someone who rises high in the
ascending strata of the Gardens
[of Paradise],
and who finds that his Prophet
(Allāh bless him and give him peace)
is pleased with him,
when he meets him
on the Day of his review
[at the Resurrection].
For he who can rely on the Qurʾān
for intercession
is not a person in trouble.

[Grant our requests]
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh,
let it be a complete Qurʾanic recital
that is blessed
for those who have recited it,
and those who have attended
and heard it,
and have said “Āmīn”
to its supplication.

Send down also, O Allāh,
some of Your bountiful blessings
to the inhabitants of houses
in their houses,
to the inhabitants of mansions
in their mansions,
to the inhabitants of seaports
in their seaports,
and to the inhabitants
of the two Holy Places⁵³⁹
in their two Holy Places,
so long as those concerned
are true believers.

O Allāh, and then there are
some members
of our religious community
among the inhabitants of the graves.
Send down to them,
in their graves,
illumination and comfort.

wa ʾjʿal-nā bi-hi
mim-man
fi darajī ʾl-janāni yartaqī

wa bi-nabīyyi-hi
(ṣalla ʾllāhu ʿalai-hi wa sallam)
yawma ʿarḍi-hi
wa huwa rāḍin
ʿan-hu yaltaqī:

fa-ʾl-mushtafī ʾu
bi-ʾl-Qurʾāni
ghairu shaqī:

bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama ʾr-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma
ʾjʿal-hā khatmatan
mubārakatan
ʿalā man qaraʾa-hā
wa ḥaḍara-hā
wa samīʿa-hā
wa ammana
ʿalā duʿāʾi-hā:

wa anzil Allāhumma
min barakāti-hā
ʿalā ahli ʾd-dūri
fi dūri-him:
wa ʿalā ahli ʾl-quṣūri
fi quṣūri-him:
wa ʿalā ahli ʾth-thughūri
fi thughūri-him:
wa ʿalā ahli ʾl-
Ḥaramaini
fi Ḥaramai-him
mina ʾl-
muʾminīn.

Allāhumma
wa ahlu ʾl-
qubūri
min ahli millati-nā
anzil ʿalai-him
fi qubūri-himu ʾd-
ḍiyāʾa wa ʾl-fuṣḥa:

⁵³⁹ The two Holy Places [al-Ḥaramān/-ain] are the cities of Mecca and Medina. (The third Holy Place [thālith al-Ḥaramain] is Jerusalem.)

Recompense them with goodness
for the good they have done,
and with forgiveness
for their bad deeds,
and treat us with compassion,
when we come to be
in the state to which they have come,
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, O Provider of nourishment,
O Hearer of the sound of the voice,
O Clother of the bones after death,
bless Muḥammad
and the family of Muḥammad.
Do not leave us, on this noble
and blessed night of ours,
with any sin
that You have not forgiven,
nor with any care
that You have not dispelled,
nor with any worry
that You have not relieved,
nor with any grief
that You have not removed,
nor with any misfortune
that You have not banished,
nor with any sick person
whom You have not cured,
nor with any suffering individual
whose well-being
You have not restored,
nor with anyone guilty
of some misconduct
whom You have not pardoned,
nor with any overdue entitlement
that You have not extracted,
nor with any missing person
whom You have not brought home,
nor with any rebellious sinner
whom You have not guided aright,
nor with any child
whom You have not
made fit and strong,
nor with anyone deceased
whom You have not
treated mercifully,
nor with any need,

wa jāzi-him
bi'l-iḥsāni iḥsānā:
wa bi's-sayyi'ati
ghufrānā:
wa 'rḥam-nā
idhā šimā
ilā mā šarū ilai-h:
bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma yā Sā'iqa 'l-qūt:
yā Sāmi'a 'ṣ-ṣawt:
yā Kāsi 'l-iẓāmi ba'da 'l-mawt:
ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
wa 'alā āli Muḥammad:
wa lā tada' la-nā fi hādhihi 'l-
lailati 'sh-sharīfati 'l-mubārakati
dhanban
illā ghafarta-h:
wa lā hamman
illā farajta-h:
wa lā karban
illā naffasta-h:
wa lā ghumman
illā kashafta-h:
wa lā su'an
illā šarafa-h:
wa lā marīḍān
illā shafaita-h:
wa lā mubtalan
illā
'āfaita-h:
wa lā dhā
isā'atin
illā aqalta-h:
wa lā ḥaqqan
illa 'stakhrajta-h:
wa lā ghā'iban
illā radadta-h:
wa lā 'āṣiyan
illā hadaita-h:
wa lā waladan
illā
jabarta-h:
wa lā mayyitan
illā
rahimta-h:
wa lā ḥājatan

connected with this world
or the Hereafter,
worthy of Your approval
and important to our welfare,
that You have not helped us to fulfill,
with a facility supplied by You,
and vitality
accompanied by forgiveness.

[Grant our requests]
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh,
grant us well-being and pardon us,
through Your mighty pardon,
and Your beautiful protection,
and Your eternally preexisting
beneficence,
O Everlasting Source of kindness,
O Abundant Source of goodness!
And bless our Chief and our
Mainstay, Muḥammad, and bless
his brethren, the Prophets, and bless
his family and the angels,
and salute them
with the greeting of peace.

Our Lord,
grant us mercy from Your presence,
and smooth the way for us to keep
our business on a rightly guided course,
and help us to succeed
in the righteous work
that will earn us Your good pleasure,
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
as You have used him to guide us
out of error.

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
as You have used him to rescue us
from ignorance.

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
as he has delivered the Message.

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad, [who is]
the sun of the cities and towns,

min ḥawā'iji 'd-dunyā
wa 'l-ākhirati
la-ka fi-hā riḍān
wa la-nā fi-hā ṣalāḥun
illā a 'anta-nā 'alā qadā'i-hā
bi-yusrin min-ka
wa 'afiyatin
ma 'a 'l-maghfira:

bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma
'āfi-nā wa 'fu 'an-nā
bi-'afwi-ka 'l-'aẓīm:
wa sitri-ka 'l-jamīl:
wa ihsāni-ka 'l-
qadīm:
yā Dā'ima 'l-ma'rūf:
yā Kathīra 'l-khair:
wa ṣalli 'alā sayyidi-nā wa
sanadi-nā Muḥammadin wa 'alā
ikhwāni-hi 'l-anbiyā'i wa 'alā
āli-hi wa 'l-malā'ikati
wa sallim
taslīmā.

Rabba-nā
āti-nā min ladun-ka rahma:
wa hayyi' la-nā
min amri-nā rushdā:
wa waffiq-nā
li-'amali 'ṣ-ṣālihi
yurḍi-ka 'an-nā:
bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
ka-mā hadaita-nā
bi-hi mina 'd-dalāla:

Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
ka-ma 'stanqadhata-nā
bi-hi mina 'l-jahāla:

Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
ka-mā ballagha 'r-risāla:

Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
shamsi 'l-bilād:

the moon of the place of rest,
the beauty of the roses,
and the intercessor
on behalf of sinners
on the Day of Summoning.⁵⁴⁰

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
and his offspring
and all his Companions,
who came to his support,
and followed his exemplary practice,
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
whom You sent
with the Truth,
and to whom You attributed veracity,
and whom You made remarkable
for tolerance,
and to whom You gave
the name Aḥmad,
and whom You have empowered
to intercede for his Community
at the Resurrection.

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
as long as the stars shine bright,
and bless Muḥammad,
as long as the clouds accumulate,
and bless Muḥammad,
O Ever-Living,
O Eternally Self-Sustaining One!

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad,
as long as the righteous remember him,
and bless Muḥammad
as long the night
and the day take turns,
and bless Muḥammad
and the Emigrés and the Helpers,
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

*wa qamari 'l-mihād:
wa zaini 'l-wirād:
wa shafi' i 'l-
mudhnibina
yawma 't-Tanād:*

*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
wa dhurriyyati-hi
wa jami'i ṣaḥābati-h:
alladhīna qāmū bi-nuṣrati-h:
wa jaraw bi-sunnati-h:
bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*

*Allāhumma ṣalli
'alā Muḥammadini 'lladhī
bi'l-ḥaqqi ba'athta-h:
wa bi'ṣ-ṣidqī na'atta-h:
wa bi'l-ḥilmi
wasamta-h:
wa bi-Aḥmada
sammaita-h:
wa fi 'l-
qiyāmati fi ummati-hi
shaffa'ta-h.*

*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
mā azharati 'n-nujūm:
wa ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
mā talāḥamati 'l-ghuyūm:
wa ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
yā Ḥayyu
yā Qayyūm.*

*Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
mā dhakara-hu 'l-abrār:
wa ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
ma 'khtalafa 'l-lailu
wa 'n-nahār:
wa ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadin
wa 'ala 'l-Muhājiriṭna wa 'l-Anṣār:
bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.*



⁵⁴⁰ The Day of Resurrection is thus referred to in Q. 40:32,33.

The exhortation [*al-waṣiyya*]

You must realize— may Allāh bestow His mercy upon you all— that this night of yours is the night of bidding farewell to your month, which Allāh has ennobled, which He has glorified, the value of which He has exalted, and which He has honored with fasting [by day] and vigil [by night], and the recitation of the Qurʾān, and the coming down to you therein of mercy and approval from Allāh.

Allāh has made it the lamp of the common folk, and the means of establishing good order, and the glory of the principles of Islām, which are resplendent with the lights of fasting and vigil.

Allāh (Exalted is He) sent down His Book therein [in the month of Ramaḍān], and in it He has opened His gates to the penitent.

In it no prayer of supplication is offered without being heard, no benefit is left without being gathered, no damage threatens without being repulsed, and no good deed is done without being honorably accepted.

Fortunate and successful is he

*iʿlamū—
raḥima-kumu ʾllāh—
anna lailata-kum hādhihi
lailatu ʾl-wadāʿi
li-shahri-kumu
ʾlladhī sharrafa-hu ʾllahu
wa ʿazzama-h:
wa rafaʿa qadra-hu
wa karrama-h:
bi-ʿṣ-ṣiyāmi wa ʾl-qiyām:*

*wa tilāwati ʾl-Qurʾān:
wa nuzūli ʾr-rahmati
fi-hi ʿalai-kum
mina ʾllāhi wa ʾr-riḍwān:*

*jaʿala-hu ʾllahu
miṣbāha ʾl-ʿamm:
wa wāsiṭata ʾn-
niḍām:
wa sharafa qawāʿidi ʾl-Islām:
al-mushriqati
bi-anwāri ʿṣ-ṣiyāmi wa ʾl-qiyām:*

*anzala ʾllahu—taʿālā—
fi-hi Kitāba-h:*

*wa fataha fi-hi
li-t-tāʾibīna abwāba-h:*

*fa-lā duʿā fi-hi
illā masmūʿ:
wa lā khaira
illā majmūʿ:
wa lā ḍurra
illā madfūʿ:
wa lā ʿamala
illā marfūʿ:*

aḏ-ḏāfiru ʾl-maimūnu

who takes advantage
of its opportunities,
and a loser who misses a bargain
is he who neglects it and lets it slip by.

It is a month which Allāh
has caused to be
a means of purification for your sins,
and a means of atonement
for your misdeeds.

For those of you
who are well-behaved
in its company,
[He has caused it to be]
a treasure and a radiant light,
and, for those who fulfill
its requirements
and observe it correctly,
a joyful and happy experience.

It is a month in which pious restraint
is practiced even by people addicted
to corrupt behavior
and immoral conduct,
while the longing for Allāh
is more intensely
felt by earnest and dedicated people.

It is the month
for the reconstruction of hearts
and the expiation of sins,
for paying special attention
to the mosques,
by keeping them crowded
and crammed,
and for the reduction of slaveholdings,
through contracts of emancipation
and manumission.

It is a month in which the mosques
are frequented,
and the lamps are made to shine,
and the verses
[of the Qurʾān] are recited,
and hearts are mended,
and sins are forgiven.

It is a month in which the mosques
are bright with radiant lights,
and the angels make many pleas

mani 'ghthanama
awqāta-h:
wa 'l-khāsiru 'l-maghbūnu
man ahmala-hu fa-fāta-h:

shahrūn
ja'ala-hu 'llāhu
li-dhunūbi-kum taṭhīrā:
wa li-sayyi'āti-kum
takfīrā:

wa li-man
ahsana
min-kum ṣuḥbata-hu

dhakhīratan wa nūrā:
wa li-man
wafā bi-shartī-hi
wa qāma bi-ḥaqq-hi
faraḥan wa surūrā:

shahrūn tawarrā'a fi-hi
ahlu 'l-fisqi
wa 'l-fasād:
wa zāda
fi-hi mina 'r-raghbatī
ila 'llāhi
ahlu 'l-jiddi wa 'l-ijtihād:

shahrū
'amārāti 'l-qulūb:
wa kaffārāti 'dh-dhunūb:
wa 'khtīṣāsi 'l-
masājid:
bi'l-izdihāmi
wa 't-tahāshud:
wa hubūṭi 'l-amlāk:
bi-ṣikāki 'l-'itqi
wa 'l-fikāk:

shahrūn fi-hi 'l-masājidu
tu'mar:
wa 'l-maṣābiḥu tuzhar:
wa 'l-āyātu
tudhkar:
wa 'l-qulūbu tujbar:
wa 'dh-dhunūbu tughfar:

shahrūn fi-hi tushriqu 'l-masājidu
bi'l-anwār:
wa tukthiru 'l-

for forgiveness on behalf
of those who are keeping the fast,
and in which
the All-Compelling One delivers—
each night
at the time of breaking fast—
six hundred thousand
souls from the Fire.

Gracious blessings
are sent down therein,
and charitable gifts
are magnified therein,
and bad deeds are expiated therein,
and lapses are pardoned therein,
and disasters are prevented therein,
and promotions are awarded therein,
and tears are mercifully
spared therein,
and therein the beautiful brides
call out,
from the Gardens [of Paradise]:
“Congratulations to you,
all you men and women
who are fasting [by day],
and all you men and women
who are keeping vigil [by night],
on all the good things that Allāh
has prepared for you!
Copious blessings are in store for you,
and your good news
is welcomed with joy
by those who inhabit
the earth and the heavens.”

So may Allāh bestow His mercy
upon any man
who prepares a bed for himself therein,
before the advent of his funeral,
and who concerns himself
with the day at hand,
rather than his tomorrow
or his yesterday,
and stocks up with provision
from its surplus,
for to waste it would amount
to wasting his life,
and who shows the regret he feels

malā' ikatu
li-ṣuwwāmi-hi mina 'l-istighfār:
wa yu'tiqū
fī-hi 'l-Jabbār:
fī kulli lailatin
'inda 'l-iftār:
sitta-mi' ati alfi
'atīqīn mina 'n-nār:
wa tunazzilu
fī-hi 'l-barakāt:
wa tu'azzamu
fī-hi 's-ṣadaqāt:
wa tukaffaru fī-hi 's-sayyi'āt:
wa tuqālu fī-hi 'l-'atharāt:
wa tudfa'u fī-hi 'n-nakabāt:
wa turfa'u fī-hi 'd-darajāt:
wa turhamu fī-hi 'l-
'abarāt:
wa tunādī fī-hi 'l-hūru 'l-
hisānu
mina 'l-jannāt:
hanī'an la-kum
yā ma'shara 's-ṣā'imīna
wa 's-ṣā'imāt:
wa 'l-qā'imīna
wa 'l-qā'imāt:
bi-mā a'adda 'llāhu la-kum
mina 'l-khairāt:
la-qad ghamarat-kumu 'l-barakāt:
wa 'stabshara
bi-kumu
ahlu 'l-arḍi
wa 's-samāwāt:
fa-rahīma 'llāhu
'mra'an
mahhada fī-hi li-nafsi-h:
qabla hulūli ramsi-h:
wa 'shtaghala
bi-yawmi-hi
'an ghadā-hu
wa amsi-h:
wa tazawwada
min baqiyyati zādi-h:
fa-fī nafādi-hi
nafādu 'umri-h:
wa azhara

over having to part with his month,
and who salutes his month
with the greeting of peace,
and bids it farewell, and says:

“Peace be upon you,
O month of Ramaḍān!
Peace be upon you,
O month of fasting and vigil
and recitation of the Qurʾān!
Peace be upon you,
O month of tolerance
and forgiveness!
Peace be upon you,
O month of blessings
and active goodness!
Peace be upon you,
O month of the treasures
and the good pleasure [of the Lord]!
Peace be upon you,
O month of rituals
and constant devotion to worship.
Peace be upon you,
O month of fasting [by day]
and vigil and prayer by night!
Peace be upon you,
O month of the *tarāwīḥ*!⁵⁴¹
Peace be upon you,
O month of the lights
and the lamps!
Peace be upon you,
O glory of the extollers!
Peace be upon you,
O light of the tender lovers!
Peace be upon you,
O garden of the worshipful!”

So, O month of ours,
we bid you farewell,
but not because you are forsaken,
and we part with you,
but not because you are hated.⁵⁴²

Your daytime has been devoted
to charitable work and fasting,
and your nighttime
to reciting the Qurʾān
and keeping vigil,

li-firāqi shahri-hi jazaʿa-h:
wa sallama
ʿalā shahri-h:
wa waddaʿa-hu wa qāl:

as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra Ramaḍān:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra ʿṣ-ṣiyāmi wa ʿl-qiyāmi
wa tilāwati ʿl-Qurʾān:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra ʿt-tajāwuzi
wa ʿl-ghufrān:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra ʿl-barakati
wa ʿl-iḥsān:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra ʿt-tuḥafi
wa ʿr-riḍwān:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra ʿn-nusuki
wa ʿt-taʿabbud:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra ʿṣ-ṣiyāmi
*wa ʿt-tahajjud:*⁷⁷⁹
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra ʿt-tarāwīḥ:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā shahra ʿl-anwāri
wa ʿl-maṣābih:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā fakhra ʿl-wāṣifin:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā nūra ʿl-wāmiqin:
as-salāmu ʿalaika
yā rawḍata ʿl-ʿābidin:

fa-yā
shahra-nā
ghaira muwaddaʿin waddaʿnā-k:
wa ghaira
maqliyyin fāraqnā-k:

kāna nahāru-ka
ṣadaqatam wa ṣiyāmā:
wa lailu-ka
qirāʿatan
wa qiyāmā:

⁵⁴¹ See Vol. 3, pp 126–35.

⁵⁴² This is an allusion to Q. 93:1–5.

so to you now, from us, comes
a salutation and a farewell greeting.

Shall we see you return to us again,
or is death destined to overtake us,
so that you do not come back to us?

Our lamps, for your duration, were
a well-known sight,
and our mosques, for your duration,
were constantly frequented.

But now the lamps
are being extinguished,
and the *tarāwīḥ* prayers
are being discontinued.
We are returning
to our ordinary practice,
and leaving the month
of worshipful service.

If only I knew
which one of us has been accepted,
so that we could congratulate
him on his excellent performance!
Or if only I knew which one of us
has been rejected, so that we could
console him for his poor performance!

To you, O you who
have been accepted,
congratulations on Allāh's reward
(Almighty and Glorious is He),
and His good pleasure and His mercy,
and His forgiveness and His approval,
and His beneficence and His pardon,
and His gracious favor
and His [gift of] eternal life
in the abode of His safekeeping.

As for you, O you
who have been rejected,
due to persistence
in sin and transgression,
and hostile aggression,
and heedlessness and deviation,
and wantonness and rebellion,
you must bear the terrible affliction
of Allāh's wrath and degradation.
So where is your weeping eye?
Where are your streaming tears?

fa-ʿalai-ka min-nā
taḥiyyatum wa salāmā.

a-narā-ka ta ʿūdu baʿda-hā ʿalai-nā:
aw yudriku-na ʿl-manūnu
fa-lā ta ʿūla ilai-nā:

maṣābīḥu-nā
fi-ka mashhūra:
wa masājīdu-nā
fi-ka ma mūra:

fa-ʿl-āna tanṭafi ʿl-
maṣābīḥ:
wa tanqatī ʿu ʿt-
tarāwīḥ:
wa narjī ʿu
ila ʿl-āda:
wa nufāriqu
shahra ʿl-ibāda:

fa-yā
laita shi ʿrī
mani ʿl-maqbūli min-nā
fa-nuhammi ʿa-hu bi-ḥusni ʿamali-h:
am laita shi ʿrī
mani ʿl-maṭrūdu min-nā
fa-nu ʿazziya-hu bi-sū ʿi ʿamali-h:

fa-yā ayyuha ʿl-
maqbūlu
hani ʿan la-ka bi-thawābi ʿllāhi—
ʿazza wa jall—
wa riḍwāni-hi wa raḥmati-hi
wa ghufrāni-hi wa qabūli-hi
wa iḥsāni-hi wa ʿafwi-hi
wa ʿmtināni-hi
wa khulūdi-hi
fi dāri amāni-h:

fa-yā ayyuha ʿl-maṭrūdu
bi-iḍrāri-hi
bi-iṣrāri-hi
wa-ṭughyāni-h:
wa ʿudwāni-h:
wa ghaflati-hi wa khusrāni-h:
wa tamādī-hi wa ʿiṣyāni-h:
la-qad ʿazumat muṣībatu-ka
bi-ghaḍabi ʿllāhi wa hawāni-hi
fa-aina muqlatu-ka ʿl-bākiya:
wa aina dam ʿatu-ka ʿl-jāriya:

And where is
your sighing and sobbing?

Until what day have you deferred
your repentance?

Until what year have you stored
your promise away?

Until some future date?

Until a year has gone by?

Oh no! The span of life
is not for you to decide,
and its full term is not for you to know.

Many an optimist has hoped
to reach it [the next Fast],
yet failed to reach it.

Many a one has attained to it,
but has not lived to complete it.

Many a one has had
a perfume prepared
for his celebration of the Festival,
which was then applied
to his place of burial,
and had clothing tailored
for his adornment,
which came to be a shroud
for his interment,
and has fully equipped himself
for his breaking of the Fast,
only to be deposited as a pledge
in his grave.⁵⁴³

Many a one will never keep a Fast
like this again,
though he is looking forward eagerly
to experiencing another
[month of Ramaḍān].

So praise Allāh, O servants of Allāh,
for the attainment of its completion,
and beg Him to accept
the fasting in it,
and the vigil observed in it,
and be aware of Him
in fulfilling His dues,
and hold fast to Allāh's lifeline⁵⁴⁴
and His help.

wa aina
zafratu-ka 'r-rā'ihatu 'l-ghādiyya:

li-ayyi yawmin akhharta
tawbata-k:
wa li-ayyi 'āmini 'ddakharta
'idata-k:

ilā 'āmin qābil:
wa ḥawlin ḥā'il:
kallā fa-mā ilai-ka
muddatu 'l-a'mār:
wa lā ma'rifatu 'l-miqdār:

fa-kam min mu'ammilin
amala bulūgha-hu
fa-lam yablugh-h:
wa kam min mudrikin la-hu
wa lam yakhtim-h:

wa kam
man a'adda ṭiban
li-'idi-h:
ju'ila
fi talhīdi-h:
wa thiyāban
li-taẓyīni-h:
ṣārat
li-takfīni-h:
wa muta'ahhiban
li-fiṭri-h:
ṣāra murtahanan
fi qabri-h:

wa kam man lā yaṣūmu
ba'da-hu siwā-h:
wa huwa yaṭma'u
fi ghairi-hi an yarā-h:

fa-'ḥmadu 'llāha 'ibāda 'llāhi
'alā bulūghī 'khitāmi-h:
wa salū-hu
qabūla ṣiyāmi-h:
wa qiyāmi-h:
wa rāqibū-hu
bi-adā' i ḥuqūqi-h:
wa 'taṣimū bi-ḥabli 'llāhi
wa tawfiqi-h:

⁵⁴³ This is an allusion to Q. 52:21 and 74:38.

⁵⁴⁴ This is an allusion to Q. 3:103.

You must also realize—may
Allāh bestow His mercy upon you all—
that you have just parted
with a mighty month,
[a month that is]
gracious and munificent.

Where are those who fasted
and kept vigil,
your counterparts
in the years gone by?

Where are those
who used to be with you
during the nights
of the month of Ramaḍān,
bearing witness and discharging
every duty to Allāh—
those fathers and mothers,
and brothers and sisters,
and neighbors and close relatives?
By Allāh, to them has come
the wrecker of delights,
the robber of desires,
and the separator of communities.

It has left the gathering places
empty of them,
and left the mosques devoid of them.
You see them cast
into the bellies of the tombs.
They find no defense
against their situation,
and they possess no power
to harm or benefit themselves.
They can only wait
for a Day whereon
the nations will be
summoned to their Lord,
and all creatures will be resurrected
and hastily assembled
at the Place of Standing.⁵⁴⁵
All sinews will tremble and quake
from the terror of that Day,
and all hearts will suffer devastation
from the shattering experience
of the Reckoning.

wa 'lamū—
rahīma-kumu 'llāh—
anna-kum fāraqtum
shahran 'azīmā

mutafaḍḍilan karīmā:
aina 'ṣ-ṣuwwāmu 'l-
quwwām:
al-muwāfiqūna la-kum
fi sāliḥi 'l-a'wām:

wa aina man
kāna ma'a-kum
layāli shahri
Ramaḍāna shāhidīn:
wa fi kulli ḥaqqi 'llāhi
mu'āmilīn:
mina 'l-ābā'i wa 'l-ummahāti:
wa 'l-ikhwati wa 'l-akhawāti:
wa 'l-jirati wa 'l-qurubāt:
atā-hum wa 'llāhi
hādīmu 'l-ladhḥāt⁷⁸⁴:
wa qāṭi' u 'sh-shahawāt:
wa mufarriqu 'l-jamā'āt:

fa-akhlā min-humu 'l-
mashāhid:
wa 'aṭṭala min-humu 'l-masājīd:
tarā-hum
fi buṭūni 'l-alḥādi ṣar'ā:
lā yajīdūna li-mā
hum fi-hi daf'ā:
wa lā yamlikūna li-anfusi-him
ḍarran wa lā naf'ā:
yantazīrūna
yawmani 'l-umami
fi-hi ilā
Rabbi-him tud'ā:
wa 'l-khalā'iqu tuḥsharu
ila 'l-mawqifi
wa tas'ā:
wa 'l-farā'īshu tarta'idu min hawli
dhālika 'l-yawmi jam'ā:
wa 'l-qulūbu tataṣaddā' u
mina 'l-ḥisābi
ṣad'ā:

⁵⁴⁵ The earthly *mawqif*, i.e., the site at 'Arafāt where the rite of 'standing' [*wuqūf*] is performed during the Pilgrimage [*Hajj*], provides a foretaste of the experience that awaits us all on the Day of Resurrection, when we shall be gathered at the Place of Standing [*al-Mawqif*] on the field of Araṣāt.

And a blast will be blown
on the Trumpet,
and then We shall
gather them together. (18:99)

O servants of Allāh!
whoever has restrained
his lower self
from that which is unlawful,
during the month of Ramaḍān,
let him continue to restrain it
in the ensuing months and years,
for the God of the two months
is One,
and over the two periods of time
He is a Watchful Supervisor.

May Allāh compensate us,
and you too,
for the departure of
the month of blessed grace.
May He grant us
our allotted portions,
and grant you
your allotted portions,
of His mercy that is shared by all.
May He bless us,
and bless you,
with His perpetual favor,
and may He cause us, and you,
to travel the path of His guidance,
through His mercy,
His grace and His kindness.

O Allāh,
whatever You have apportioned,
on this night,
in the way of deliverance
and forgiveness,
and mercy and good pleasure,
and pardon and benevolence,
and munificence and benefaction,
and salvation from the Fires [of Hell],
and everlasting sojourn
in the bliss of the Gardens
[of Paradise], grant us
the most copious share thereof,
and the most abundant portions,
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

wa nufikha
fi 'ṣ-ṣūri
fa-jama' nā-hum
jam'ā:

'ibāda 'llāhi
man kāna mana'a
nafsa-hu
mina 'l-ḥarām:
fi shahri Ramaḍān:
fa-'l-ḡamna' -hā fi-mā ba'da-hu
mina 'sh-shuhūri wa 'l-a' wām:
fa-inna llāha 'sh-shahraini
Wāḥid:
wa Huwa 'ala 'z-ḡamānaini
Muṭṭali'un Shāhid:

jazā-na 'llāhu
wa iyyā-kum
'alā firāqi
shahri 'l-baraka:
wa ajzala
aqsāma-nā
wa
aqsāma-kum
min raḥmati-hi 'l-mushtaraka:
wa bāraka la-nā
wa la-kum
fi baqiyyati-h:
wa salaka bi-nā wa bi-kum
ṭarīqa hidāyati-h:
bi-raḥmati-hi
wa faḍli-hi wa minnati-h.

Allāhumma
wa mā qasamta
fi hādhihi 'l-lailati
min 'itqin
wa ghufrān:
wa raḥmatin wa riḍwān:
wa 'afwin wa 'mtinān:
wa karamin wa iḥsān:
wa najātin mina 'n-nirān:
wa khulūdin
fi na'imi 'l-jinān:
fa-'j'al
la-nā min-hu
awfara 'l-ḥazzi wa ajzala 'l-aqsām:
bi-raḥmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

O Allāh, as You brought us
 the month of fasting,
 grant that our next year may be
 one of the most
 blessed of all our years,
 and that our coming days may be
 among the happiest of all our days.
 Accept from us
 the fasting and the vigil
 that we have offered up this month,
 and grant us forgiveness for the sins
 we have committed in the course of it,
 and rid us of the iniquities
 of humankind,
 on the Day when
 there will be no appeal
 to anyone apart from You.
 O All-Knowing One!
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, we have undertaken
 the [daytime] fasting of our month,
 and its nighttime vigil,
 though quite inadequately.
 We have discharged
 in the course of it
 no more than a little
 of much that is due to You.
 We now stand begging at Your door,
 seeking Your gracious favor,
 so do not send us away disappointed,
 and despairing of Your mercy.

We are the poor folk who need You,
 the captives who stand before You.
 To You our application is addressed,
 and for Your gracious favor
 our petition is lodged.
 At Your door we have knocked,
 and for Your mercy we have begged,
 so treat our humility with compassion,
 and mend our hearts,
 and overlook our faults,
 and forgive our sins,
 and comfort us⁵⁴⁶ at the Resurrection,
 and do not turn
 Your Noble Countenance
 away from us,

Allāhumma fa-ka-mā ballaghta-nā
 shahra 'ṣ-ṣiyām:
 fa-'j'al 'āma-nā 'alai-nā
 min
 abraki 'l-a'wām:
 wa ayyāma-nā
 min as'adi 'l-ayyām:
 wa taqabbal min-nā
 mā qaddamnā-hu
 fi-hi mina 'ṣ-ṣiyāmi wa 'l-qiyām:
 wa 'ghfir la-nā ma 'qtarafnā fi-hi
 mina 'l-āthām:
 wa khalliṣ-nā
 min maẓālimi 'l-anām:
 yawma
 lā yurjā
 fi-hi siwā-k:
 yā 'Allām:
 yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma innā qad tawallainā
 ṣiyāma shahri-nā
 wa qiyāma-hu
 'alā taqṣīr:
 wa adainā fi-hi
 min ḥaqqi-ka
 qatīlan
 min kathīr:
 wa qad anakhnā bi-bābi-ka sā'itīn:
 wa li-mā'rūfi-ka ṭālibīn:
 fa-lā tarudda-nā khā'ibīn:
 wa lā min raḥmati-ka āyisīn:
 fa-naḥnu 'l-fuqarā'u ilai-k:
 al-asrā baina yadai-k:
 ilai-ka tawajjuhu-nā:
 wa li-mā'rūfi-ka
 ta'arruḍu-nā:
 wa li-bābi-ka qarā'nā:
 wa min raḥmati-ka sā'alnā:
 fa-'rḥam khuḍū'a-nā:
 wa 'jbur qulūba-nā:
 wa 'stur 'uyūba-nā:
 wa 'ghfir dhunūba-nā:
 wa aqirra fi 'l-qiyāmati 'uyūni-nā:
 wa lā taṣrif
 Wajha-ka 'l-Karīma
 'an-nā:

⁵⁴⁶ Literally: “and cool our eyes.”

and cause our work to be accepted,
and our striving to be acknowledged,
and grant us this night
an abundance of good fortune.

O Allāh, if it is predetermined,
according to Your foreknowledge,
that You will bring us together
in another [Ramaḍān] like this,
let it be a blessed experience for us.

And if You have foreordained
the termination of our life spans,
and that something will intervene
to prevent us from surviving until then,
let our successors be good
to those we leave behind,
and view our past
with generous compassion.
Embrace us all completely
in Your mercy and Your forgiveness,
and let the reunion take place
in the midst of Your Garden
[of Paradise]
and Your good pleasure,
in the company of those
to whom Allāh has granted
gracious favor—the Prophets,
the champions of truth, the martyrs
and the righteous—and the best
of company are they!⁵⁴⁷

[Grant our requests]
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh,
the occupants of the graves
are the pledges of sins,
not allowed to go free,
and prisoners in solitary confinement,
not to be released,
and absent travellers,
not expected to return.
The dust of the earth has erased
the good looks of their faces,
and the vermin live beside them
in the vaults of their graves,
for they are stiff, incapable of talking,

wa 'j' al 'amala-nā maqbūlā:
wa sa 'ya-nā mashkūrā:
wa ḥaḥḥa-nā
fī ḥādhihi 'l-lailati mawfūrā:

Allāhumma in kāna
min sābiqi 'ilmi-ka
an tajmā 'u-nā
fī mithli-h:
fa-bārik la-nā fī-h:

wa in qaḍaita
bi-qaṭ 'i ājāli-nā:
wa mā yaḥūlu bainā-nā
wa bainā-h:
fa-aḥsini 'l-khilāfata
'alā bāqī-nā:
wa awsi 'i 'r-raḥmata
'alā māḍī-nā:
wa 'ummu-nā jamī 'an
bi-rahmati-ka wa ghufṛāni-k:
wa 'j' ali 'l-maw 'ida
buhbūha jannati-ka

wa riḍwāni-k:
ma 'a 'lladhīna an 'amta 'alai-him
mina 'n-nabiyyīna
wa 'ṣ-ṣiddīqīna wa 'sh-shuhadā 'i
wa 'ṣ-ṣāliḥīn:
wa ḥasuna ulā 'ika
rafiqā.

bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma
wa ahli 'l-qubūri
rahā 'inu dhunūbin
lā yuṭlaqūn:
wa asārā waḥshatin
lā yufakkūn:
wa ghurabā 'u safarin
lā yuntazarūn:
maḥat dārisātu 'th-tharā
maḥāsina wujūhi-him:
wa jāwarat-humu 'l-hawāmmu
fī malāḥidi qubūri-him:
fa-hum jamūḍun lā yatakallamūn:

⁵⁴⁷ These six lines, beginning with “in the company of those...,” constitute a partial quotation of Q. 4:69.

near neighbors
 who cannot visit one another,
 and the inhabitants of a tomb,
 which they cannot leave
 until the Resurrection.
 Among them are doers of good
 and evildoers,
 and negligent types
 as well as hard workers.

O Allāh, if there is someone
 amongst them who is already happy,
 grant him still more dignity and joy,
 and if anyone amongst
 them is depressed,
 replace his sadness
 with joy and happiness.

O Allāh,
 treat with compassion all the Muslims
 who have died while traveling,
 and those who have surrendered
 their souls at home,
 through Your Mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh, grant
 that their graves may be
 tunnels through which
 Your blessings flow,
 and places where Your gifts are stored,
 and paths for Your beneficence,
 and channels for Your pardon
 and forgiveness,
 so that [their occupants]
 may rest in peace
 within the confines of their tombs,
 assured of Your grace
 and generosity,
 and already advanced
 to Your highest degrees.

Confer this special favor
 on the fathers and the sons,
 and the brothers and the next of kin.

[Confer it]
 before the work of demolition
 wrecks the edifice completely,
 and murky gloom

wa jirānun
qurbun lā yatazāwarūn:
wa sukkānu lahđim
ila 'l-ħashri
lā yaz' anūn:
wa fi-him muħsinūna
wa musī'ūn:
wa muqaṣṣirūna
wa mujtahidūn:

Allāhumma fa-man kāna
min-hum masrūrā:
fa-zid-hu karāmatan wa ħubūrā:
wa man kāna
min-hum malħūfā:
fa-badhdhil ħuzna-hu
farāħan wa surūrā.

Allāhumma
wa ta'atṭaf' alā kāffati
amwāt al-muslimīna 'r-rāħilīn:
wa 'l-muqimīna 'l-
mustaslimīn:
bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arħama 'r-rāħimīn.

Allāhumma 'j'al
qubūra-hum
mafāyiḍa
ṣalawāti-k:
wa maqārra hibāti-k:
wa turuqa iħsāni-k:
wa majāriya 'afwi-ka
wa għufrāni-k:
ħattā yakūnū
ilā buṭūni 'l-alħādi
mutma'innīn:
wa bi-jūdi-ka
wa karami-ka wāthiqīn:
wa ilā 'lā
darajāti-ka sābiqīn:
wa 'kħsuṣ bi-dhālika 'l-ābā'a
wa 'l-banīn:
wa 'l-ikhwata wa 'l-aqrabīn:

qabla an yashtamila 'l-hadmu
'ala 'l-binā':
wa 'l-kadaru

obliterates pure clarity,
and the cord of hope is cut
adrift from life,
and the dwellings lie buried
beneath the layers of earth.

[Confer it] before the wind
becomes a hurricane,
and the drop becomes a flood,
and the morning turns into a night,
and death drags a skirt across
the inhabitants of the heavens
and the earth.

[Confer it] before
the grand old man cries:
“White hair! What a pity!” and
the eminent middle-aged man cries:
“Disgrace! What a pity!”
and the guilty sinner cries:
“Failure! What a pity!”
and the young boy cries:
“Disappointment! What a pity!”

[Confer it before]
they are too ashamed
and filled with dread,
and remorse has overwhelmed them,
and their mouths have been sealed
so that they cannot speak,
and all they can do is tilt their heads,
so they bow their heads in silence,
and they have witnessed
such terrors that
they dearly wish
they had never been created.

O Allāh, O Provider of nourishment,
O Hearer of the sound of the voice,
O Clothier of the bones after death,
bless Muḥammad
and the family of Muḥammad.

Do not leave us, on this noble
and blessed night of ours,
with any sin
that You have not forgiven,
nor with any care
that You have not dispelled,
nor with any worry

‘ala ‘s-ṣafā’:
wa yanqaṭi‘a mina ‘l-ḥayāti
ḥablu ‘r-rajā’:
wa taṣīra ‘l-manāzilū
taḥta aṭbāqi ‘th-tharā:

wa qabla an
yaṣīra ‘r-rīḥu wailā:
wa ‘l-qaṭru sailā:
wa ‘s-ṣubḥu lailā:
wa yaṣhaba ‘l-mawtu ‘alā
ahli ‘s-samāwāti
wa ‘l-arḍi dhailā:

wa qabla an
yaqūla ‘sh-shaikhu ‘l-kabīr:
wāshaibāh:
wa yaqūla ‘l-kahlu ‘l-khaṭīr:
wākhaḥlatāh:
wa yaqūla ‘l-mudhnibu ‘l-musī’:
wākhaibatāh:
wa yaqūla ‘l-ḥadathu ‘s-ṣaghīr:
wāhasratāh:

wa ukhjlū min-hu
wa ashfaqū:
wa ghashiyat-hum mina ‘n-nadāma:
wa khutima ‘alā afwāhi-him
fa-lā yanṭuqū:
wa waqafū ‘alā ‘amali
naksi ‘r-ru’ūsī fa-aṭraqū:
wa ‘āyanū mina ‘l-ahwāli
ma waddū
ma‘a-hu anna-hum
lam yukhlaqū:

Allāhumma yā Sā’iqā ‘l-qūt:
yā Sāmi‘a ‘s-ṣawt:
yā Kāsi ya ‘l-‘izāmi ba‘da ‘l-mawt:
ṣalli ‘alā Muḥammadin
wa ‘alā āli Muḥammad:

wa lā tada‘ la-nā fi ḥādhihi ‘l-
lailati ‘sh-sharīfati ‘l-mubārakati
dhanban
illā ghafarta-h:
wa lā hamman
illā farajta-h:
wa lā karban

that You have not relieved,
 nor with any grief
 that You have not removed,
 nor with any misfortune
 that You have not banished,
 nor with any sick person
 whom You have not cured,
 nor with any suffering individual
 whose well-being
 You have not restored,
 nor with anyone guilty
 of some misconduct
 whom You have not pardoned,
 nor with any overdue entitlement
 that You have not extracted,
 nor with any missing person
 whom You have not made
 fit and strong,
 nor with anyone deceased
 whom You have not
 treated mercifully,
 nor with any need,
 connected with this world
 or the Hereafter,
 worthy of Your approval
 and important to our welfare,
 that You have not helped us to fulfill,
 with a facility supplied by You,
 and vitality accompanied
 by forgiveness.

[Grant our requests]
 through Your Mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!

Forgive us our sins,
 and [forgive] our fathers
 and our mothers,
 and our brothers and our sisters,
 and our offspring
 and our close relatives,
 and our friends and our teachers,
 and those to whom
 we have recited the Qurān,
 and those who have recited it to us,
 and those from whom we have learned,
 and those who have learned from us,
 and those who have asked us

illā naffasta-h:
wa lā ghumman
illā kashafta-h:
wa lā sū'an
illā šarafta-h:
wa lā marīdān
illā šafaita-h :
wa lā muḅtalan
illā
'āfaita-h:
wa lā dhā
isā'atin
illā aqalta-h:
wa lā ḥaqqan
illa 'stakhrājta-h:
wa lā ghā'iban
illā
jabarta-h:
wa lā mayyitan
illā
raḥimta-h:
wa lā ḥājatan
min ḥawā'iji 'd-dunyā
wa 'l-ākhirati
la-ka fi-hā riḍān
wa la-nā fi-hā ṣalāḥun
illā a'anta-nā 'alā qaḍā'i-hā
bi-yusrin min-ka
wa 'āfiyatin
ma'a 'l-maghfira:

bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

ighfir la-nā dhunūba-nā
wa li-ābā'i-nā
wa ummahāti-nā
wa ikhwāni-nā wa akhawāti-nā
wa dhurriyyāti-nā
wa qarābāti-nā
wa aṣḍiqā'i-nā wa mu'allimī-nā:
wa man
qara'nā 'alai-h:
wa man qara'a 'alai-nā:
wa ta'allamnā min-h:
wa ta'allama min-nā:
wa man sa'ala-na 'd-

to pray for them,
and those whom we have asked
to pray for us,
and those who have loved us
for Your sake,
and those whom we have loved
for Your sake,
and those who
have looked after us for Your sake,
and those we have looked after
for Your sake.
[Forgive] those of them
who are still alive,
and those who of them
who are now dead.

[Grant our requests]
through Your Mercy,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!

O Allāh,
O Knower of all secret things!
O Dispeller of trials and tribulations!
O You who are Responsive
to supplications!
O Remover of anxieties
and apprehensions!

Bless Muḥammad,
the most excellent of creatures.
Enable us to benefit by the signs
which You have set forth
in Your Book,
and allow us to atone for our misdeeds
through the practice of its recitation.
Promote us,
through the fasting and vigil
of the month of Ramaḍān,
to ascending degrees in Your presence.

[Grant our requests]
through Your Mercy,
O Knower of all secret things.

Bless Muḥammad,
and the family of Muḥammād.

Forgive, through the Qurʾān,
our sinful ways,
and through it
bestow on us abundant gifts,

duʿā':
wa man sa' alnā-hu 'd-
duʿā':
wa man aḥabba-nā
fi-k:
wa man aḥbabnā-hu
fi-k:
wa man
tawallā-nā fi-k:
wa man tawallainā-hu
fi-k:
wa man kāna
min-hum ḥayyā:
wa man kāna
min-kum mayyitā:

bi-rahmati-ka
yā Arḥama 'r-rāḥimīn.

Allāhumma
yā ʿĀlima 'l-khaḥfiyyāt:
wa yā Dāfi ʿa 'l-baliyyāt:
wa yā Muḥjiba 'd-
daʿawāt:
wa yā Kāshifa 'l-
kurubāt:

ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammadin
afḍali 'l-bariyyāt:
wa 'nfa ʿnā bi-mā ṣarafta
fi Kitābi-ka
mina 'l-āyāt:
wa kaffir ʿan-nā
bi-tilāwati-hi 's-sayyi'āt:
wa 'rfa
la-nā bi-ṣiyāmi
shahri Ramaḍāna wa qiyāmi-hi
ʿinda-ka 'd-darajāt:

bi-rahmati-ka
yā ʿĀlima 'l-khaḥfiyyāt:

ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammadin
wa ʿalā āli Muḥammad:

wa 'ghfir bi'l-Qurʾāni
khaḥyā-nā:
wa ajzil
bi-hi ʿatāyā-nā:

and through it heal our sick,
 and through it
 have mercy on our dead,
 and through it
 improve the state of our affairs,
 in both our religious
 and our worldly life,
 and through it
 relieve us of the burden of sins.
 Confer on us
 the good qualities of the righteous.
 Forgive us our slips and our stumbles.
 Purify our hearts
 and our innermost beings.
 Improve through it the way we talk,
 and through it clean the way we think.
 Reduce the market prices
 for our benefit.
 Avert from us the wickedness
 of the bad
 and the cunning tricks
 of the profligate.
 Let us thrive on the love
 of the best of companions,
 and unite us with them
 in the abode of permanent stability,⁵⁴⁸
 and include us among those
 whom You deliver from the Fire.

And give us in this world
 that which is good,
 and in the Hereafter
 that which is good,
 and guard us against
 the torment of the Fire [of Hell].⁵⁴⁹

[Grant our requests]
 through Your mercy,
 O Most Merciful of the merciful!

Praise be to Allāh
 for the bountiful gifts
 of His gracious favor,
 and His blessings be upon Muḥammad,
 the Seal of His Prophets,
 and upon his family, his companions
 and his wives,
 and may He salute them all
 with many greetings of peace.

wa 'shfi bi-hi marḍā-nā:
 wa 'rḥam
 bi-hi mawtā-nā:
 wa aṣliḥ
 bi-hi umūra
 dīni-nā
 wa duniyā-nā:
 wa 'ḥṭuṭ bi-hi
 'an-nā thaqla 'l-awzār:
 wa hab la-nā
 ḥusna shamā'ili 'l-abrār:
 wa 'ghfir la-na 'l-zīlā wa 'l-ithār:
 wa taḥhir la-na 'l-qulūba
 wa 'l-asrār:
 wa ṭayyib la-nā bi-hi 'l-adhkār:
 wa ṣaffi la-nā bi-hi 'l-aḥkār:
 wa arkhīṣ
 la-na 'l-as'ār:
 wa 'ṣrif 'an-nā
 sharra 'l-ashwār:
 wa kaida 'l-
 fujjār:
 wa ahyi-nā
 'alā ḥubbi 'ṣ-ṣaḥābati 'l-akhyār:
 wa 'jma' baina-nā wa baina-hum
 fi dāri 'l-qarār:
 wa 'j'āl-nā min 'utaqā' i-ka
 mina 'n-nār:

wa āti-nā fi 'd-dunyā
 ḥasanatan
 wa fi 'l-ākhirati
 ḥasanatan
 wa qī-nā
 'adhāba 'n-nār:

bi-rahmati-ka
 yā Arḥama 'r-rāhimīn.

al-ḥamdu li'llāhi
 'alā sawābighi
 na' mā' i-h:
 wa ṣalawātu-hu 'alā Muḥammadin
 Khātami Anbiyā' i-h:
 wa 'alā āli-hi wa aṣḥābi-hi
 wa azwājī-h:
 wa sallama
 taslimān kathīrā.

⁵⁴⁸ This is an allusion to Q. 40:38,39.

⁵⁴⁹ Q. 2:201.



This brings us to the end of the Chapter concerning the prayers of supplication [*ad'iyā*] offered after the obligatory ritual prayers [*aṣ-ṣalawāt al-fard*], and the supplication following the recital of the entire Qur'ān [*du'ā' al-khatma*].

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of All the Worlds!
[*al-ḥamdu li'llāhi Rabbi 'l-'ālamīn*].



Concerning the Author, Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī

A Brief Introduction by the Translator¹

The Author’s Names and Titles

A rich store of information about the author of *Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth* is conveniently available, to those familiar with the religious and spiritual tradition of Islām, in his names, his surnames, and the many titles conferred upon him by his devoted followers. It is not unusual for these to take up several lines in an Arabic manuscript, but let us start with the short form of the author’s name as it appears on the cover and title page of this book: *Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī*.

Shaikh: A term applied throughout the Islamic world to respected persons of recognized seniority in learning, experience and wisdom. Its basic meaning in Arabic is “an elder; a man over fifty years of age.” (The spellings *Sheikh* and *Shaykh* may also be encountered in English-language publications.)

‘Abd al-Qādir: This is the author’s personal name, meaning “Servant [or Slave] of the All-Powerful.” (The form *‘Abdul Qādir*, which the reader may come across elsewhere, is simply an alternative transliteration of the Arabic spelling.) It has always been a common practice, in the Muslim community, to give a male child a name in which ‘Abd is prefixed to one of the Names of Allāh.

¹ Reproduced for the convenience of the reader, with slight modifications from the version printed on pp. xiii-xix of: Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir. *Revelations of the Unseen (Futūḥ al-Ghaib)*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Houston, Texas: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1992.

al-Jīlānī: A surname ending in *-ī* will often indicate the bearer's place of birth. Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir was born in the Iranian district of Gīlān, south of the Caspian Sea, in A.H. 470/1077-8 C.E. (In some texts, the Persian spelling *Gīlānī* is used instead of the arabicized form *al-Jīlānī*. The abbreviated form *al-Jīlī*, which may also be encountered, should not be confused with the surname of the venerable ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jīlī, author of the celebrated work *al-Insān al-Kāmil*, who came from Jīl in the district of Baghdād.)

Let us now consider a slightly longer version of the Shaikh's name, as it occurs near the beginning of *Al-Faṭḥ ar-Rabbānī* [*The Sublime Revelation*]: *Sayyidunā 'sh-Shaikh Muḥyi' d-Dīn Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir (Raḍiya'llāhu 'anh)*.

Sayyidunā 'sh-Shaikh: "Our Master, the Shaikh." A writer who regards himself as a Qādirī, a devoted follower of Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir, will generally refer to the latter as *Sayyidunā* [our Master], or *Sayyidī* [my Master].

Muḥyi' d-Dīn: "Reviver of the Religion." It is widely acknowledged by historians, non-Muslim as well as Muslim, that Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir displayed great courage in reaffirming the traditional teachings of Islām, in an era when sectarianism was rife, and when materialistic and rationalistic tendencies were predominant in all sections of society. In matters of Islamic jurisprudence [*fiqh*] and theology [*kalām*], he adhered quite strictly to the highly "orthodox" school of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.

Abū Muḥammad: "Father of Muḥammad." In the Arabic system of nomenclature, a man's surnames usually include the name of his first-born son, with the prefix *Abū* [Father of—].

Raḍiya'llāhu 'anh: "May Allāh be well pleased with him!" This benediction is the one customarily pronounced—and spelled out in writing—after mentioning the name of a Companion of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace). The preference for this particular invocation is yet another mark of the extraordinary status held by Shaikh ʿAbd al-Qādir in the eyes of his devoted followers.

Finally, we must note some important elements contained within this even longer version: *al-Ghawth al-A‘zam Sultān al-Awliyā’ Sayyidunā ‘sh-Shaikh Muḥyi’-d-Dīn ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī al-Ḥasanī al-Ḥusainī (Raḍiya’llāhu ‘anh)*.

al-Ghawth al-A‘zam: “The Supreme Helper” (or, “The Mightiest Succor”). *Ghawth* is an Arabic word meaning: (1) A cry for aid or succor. (2) Aid, help, succor; deliverance from adversity. (3) The chief of the Saints, who is empowered by Allāh to bring succor to suffering humanity, in response to His creatures’ cry for help in times of extreme adversity.

Sultān al-Awliyā’: “The Sultan of the Saints.” This reinforces the preceding title, emphasizing the supremacy of the *Ghawth* above all other orders of sanctity.

al-Ḥasanī al-Ḥusainī: “The descendant of both al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusain, the grandsons of the Prophet (Allāh bless him and give him peace).” To quote the Turkish author, Shaikh Muzaffer Ozak Efendi (may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him): “The lineage of Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir is known as the Chain of Gold, since both his parents were descendants of the Messenger (Allāh bless him and give him peace). His noble father, ‘Abdullāh, traced his descent by way of Imām Ḥasan, while his revered mother, Umm al-Khair, traced hers through Imām Ḥusain.”

As for the many other surnames, titles and honorific appellations that have been conferred upon Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, it may suffice at this point to mention *al-Bāz al-Ashhab* [The Gray Falcon].

The Author’s Life in Baghdād

Through the mists of legend surrounding the life of Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, it is possible to discern the outlines of the following biographical sketch:

In A.H. 488, at the age of eighteen, he left his native province to become a student in the great capital city of Baghdād, the hub of political, commercial and cultural activity, and the center of religious learning in

the world of Islām. After studying traditional sciences under such teachers as the prominent Ḥanbalī jurist [*faqīh*], Abū Sa‘d ‘Alī al-Mukharrimī, he encountered a more spiritually oriented instructor in the saintly person of Abu’l-Khair Ḥammād ad-Dabbās. Then, instead of embarking on his own professorial career, he abandoned the city and spent twenty-five years as a wanderer in the desert regions of ‘Irāq.

He was over fifty years old by the time he returned to Baghdād, in A.H. 521/1127 C.E., and began to preach in public. His hearers were profoundly affected by the style and content of his lectures, and his reputation grew and spread through all sections of society. He moved into the school [*madrasa*] belonging to his old teacher al-Mukharrimī, but the premises eventually proved inadequate. In A.H. 528, pious donations were applied to the construction of a residence and guesthouse [*ribāt*], capable of housing the Shaikh and his large family, as well as providing accommodation for his pupils and space for those who came from far and wide to attend his regular sessions [*majālis*].

He lived to a ripe old age, and continued his work until his very last breath, as we know from the accounts of his final moments recorded in the Addendum to Revelations of the Unseen.

In the words of Shaikh Muzaffer Ozak Efendi: “The venerable ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī passed on to the Realm of Divine Beauty in A.H. 561/1166 C.E., and his blessed mausoleum in Baghdād is still a place of pious visitation. He is noted for his extraordinary spiritual experiences and exploits, as well as his memorable sayings and wise teachings. It is rightly said of him that ‘he was born in love, grew in perfection, and met his Lord in the perfection of love.’ May the All-Glorious Lord bring us in contact with his lofty spiritual influence!”

The Author’s Literary Works

***Al-Faḥḥ ar-Rabbānī* [The Sublime Revelation].** A collection of sixty-two discourses delivered by Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir in the years A.H. 545-546/1150-1152 C.E. Arabic text published by Dār al-Albāb, Damascus,

n.d. Arabic text with Urdu translation: Madīna Publishing Co., Karachi, 1989. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Houston, Texas: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1992.

Even a non-Muslim scholar like D.S. Margoliouth was so favorably impressed by the content and style of *Al-Faṭḥ ar-Rabbānī* that he wrote:² “The sermons included in [this work] are some of the very best in Muslim literature: the spirit which they breathe is one of charity and philanthropy: the preacher would like to ‘close the gates of Hell and open those of Paradise to all mankind.’ He employs Ṣūfī technicalities very rarely, and none that would occasion the ordinary reader much difficulty....”

Malḥūzāt [Utterances]. A loosely organized compilation of talks and sayings by Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir, almost equal in total length to Revelations of the Unseen. Frequently treated as a kind of appendix or supplement to manuscript and printed versions of *Al-Faṭḥ ar-Rabbānī*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Houston, Texas: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1992.

Futūḥ al-Ghaib [Revelations of the Unseen]. A collection of seventy-eight discourses. The Arabic text, edited by Muḥammad Sālim al-Bawwāb, has been published by Dār al-Albāb, Damascus, 1986. German translation: W. Braune. *Die Futūḥ al-Gaib des ‘Abd al-Qādir*. Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1933. English translations: (1) M. Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad. *Futuh Al-Ghaib [The Revelations of the Unseen]*. Lahore, Pakistan: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf. Repr. 1986. (2) Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī. *Revelations of the Unseen (Futūḥ al-Ghaib)*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Houston, Texas: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1992.

Jalā’ al-Khawāṭir [The Removal of Cares]. A collection of forty-five discourses by Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir. Arabic text with Urdu translation published by Maktaba Nabawiyya, Lahore, n.d. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Ft. Lauderdale, Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1997.

² In his article “‘Abd al-Qādir” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (also printed in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1961).

***Sirr al-Asrār* [The Secret of Secrets].** A short work, divided into twenty-four chapters, in which “the realities within our faith and our path are divulged.” English translation: *The Secret of Secrets by Ḥaḍrat ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī*, interpreted by Shaykh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti. Cambridge, England: The Islamic Texts Society, 1992.

***Al-Ḡhunya li-ṭālibī ṭarīq al-ḥaqq* [Sufficient Provision for Seekers of the Path of Truth].** Arabic text published in two parts by Dār al-Albāb, Damascus, n.d., 192 pp. + 200 pp. Translated from the Arabic (in 5 vols.) by Muhtar Holland. Hollywood, Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1997.

Other works attributed to Shaikh ‘Abd al-Qādir include short treatises on some of the Divine Names; litanies [*awrād/aḥzāb*]; prayers and supplications [*da‘awāt/munājāt*]; mystical poems [*qaṣā‘id*].

May Allāh forgive our mistakes and failings, and may He bestow His blessings upon all connected with our project—especially our gracious readers! Āmīn.

Muhtar Holland

About the Translator

Muhtar Holland was born in 1935, in the ancient city of Durham in the North East of England. This statement may be considered anachronistic, however, since he did not bear the name Muhtar until 1969, when he was moved—by powerful experiences in the *latihan kejiwaan* of Subud—to embrace the religion of Islām.*

At the age of four, according to an entry in his father’s diary, he said to a man who asked his name: “I’m a stranger to myself.” During his years at school, he was drawn most strongly to the study of languages, which seemed to offer signposts to guide the stranger on his “Journey Home,” apart from their practical usefulness to one who loved to spend his vacations traveling—at first on a bicycle—through foreign lands. Serious courses in Latin, Greek, French, Spanish and Danish, with additional smatterings of Anglo-Saxon, Italian, German and Dutch. Travels in France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Denmark. Then a State Scholarship and up to Balliol College, Oxford, for a degree course centered on the study of Arabic and Turkish. Travels in Turkey and Syria. Then National Service in the Royal Navy, with most of the two years spent on an intensive course in the Russian language.

In the years since graduation from Oxford and Her Majesty’s Senior Service, Mr. Holland has held academic posts at the University of Toronto, Canada; at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London, England (with a five-month leave to study Islamic Law in Cairo, Egypt); and at the Universiti Kebangsaan in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (followed by a six-month sojourn in Indonesia). He also worked as Senior Research Fellow at the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, England, and as Director of the Nūr al-Islām Translation Center in Valley Cottage, New York.

* The name Muhtar was received at that time from Bapak Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo, of Wisma Subud, Jakarta, in response to a request for a suitable Muslim name. In strict academic transliteration from the Arabic, the spelling would be *Mukhtār*. The form *Muhtar* is probably more common in Indonesia than *Muhtar*, which happens to coincide with the modern Turkish spelling of the name.

His freelance activities have mostly been devoted to writing and translating in various parts of the world, including Scotland and California. He made his Pilgrimage [*Hajj*] to Mecca in 1980.

Published works include the following:

Al-Ghazālī. *On the Duties of Brotherhood*. Translated from the Classical Arabic by Muhtar Holland. London: Latimer New Dimensions, 1975. New York: Overlook Press, 1977. Repr. 1980 and 1993.

Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *The Unveiling of Love*. Translated from the Turkish by Muhtar Holland. New York: Inner Traditions, 1981. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1990.

Ibn Taymīya. *Public Duties in Islām*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Leicester, England: Islamic Foundation, 1982.

Hasan Shushud. *Masters of Wisdom of Central Asia*. Translated from the Turkish by Muhtar Holland. Ellingsstring, England: Coombe Springs Press, 1983.

Al-Ghazālī. *Inner Dimensions of Islamic Worship*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Leicester, England: Islamic Foundation, 1983.

Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *Irshād*. Translated [from the Turkish] with an Introduction by Muhtar Holland. Warwick, New York: Amity House, 1988. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1990.

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Sheikh Muzaffer Ozak al-Jerrahi. *Ashki's Divan*. Translation from the Original Turkish by Muhtar Holland and Sixtina Friedrich. Westport, Ct.: Pir Publications, 1991.

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Shaikh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī. *The Removal of Cares (Jalā' al-Khawāṭir)*. Translated from the Arabic by Muhtar Holland. Ft. Lauderdale, Florida: Al-Baz Publishing, Inc., 1997

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